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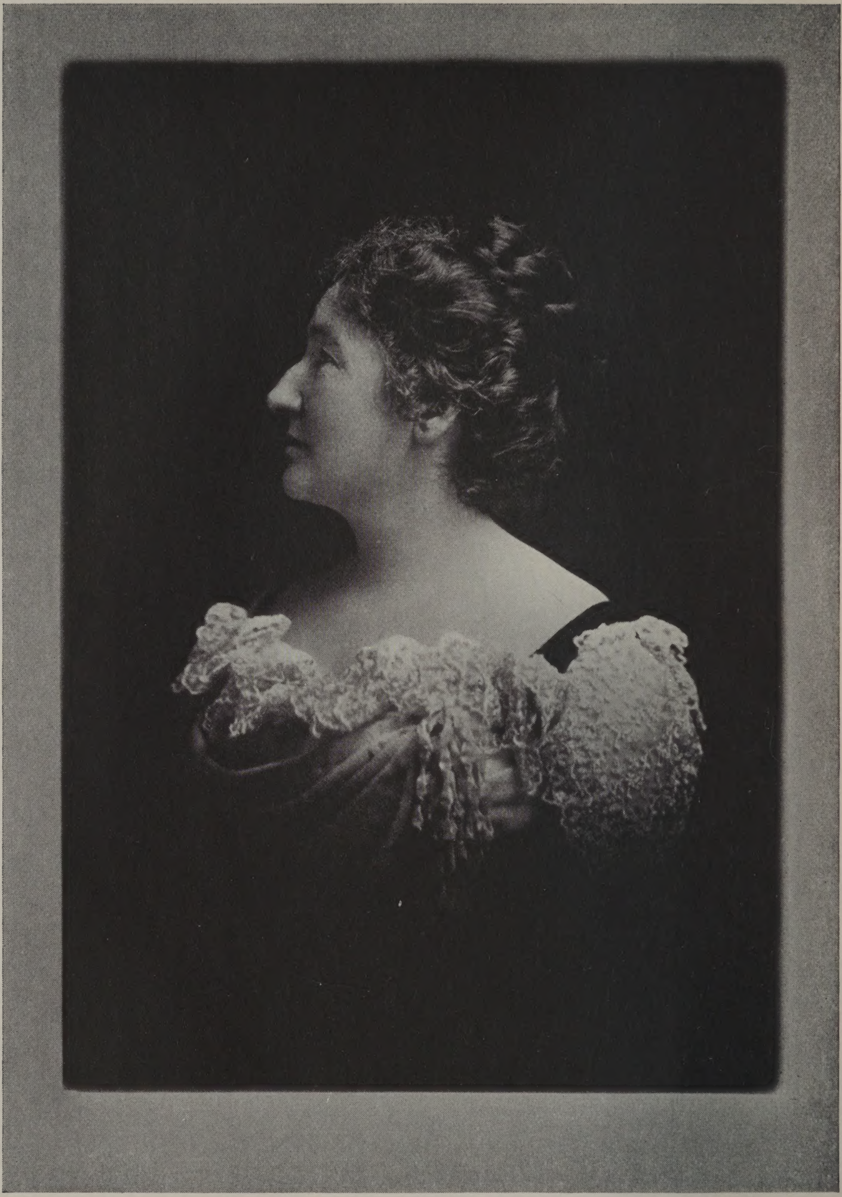

CLARA KATHLEEN ROGERS
(Clara Doria)

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MEMORIES OF A MUSICAL CAREER

BY

CLARA KATHLEEN ROGERS
(CLARA DORIA)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

PRIVATELY PRINTED AT THE
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TO MY
FATHER AND MOTHER

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK IN TENDER MEMORY
OF THEIR LOVING SELF-SACRIFICE, NEVER
FULLY REQUITED BUT EVER REMEMBERED
WITH UNDYING GRATITUDE

FOREWORD

THIS story of my life would never have been written but for the repeated urgings of friends who considered many of my experiences of unusual interest, — as voiced by me in the intimacy of friendly intercourse.

It was long before I could make up my mind to respond to their urgings for the reason that an Autobiography generally suggests that the writer is a person of importance in the eyes of the world, and I did not feel that I could arrogate to myself that distinction, or that the public would be interested in my concerns.

When, however, it was put to me that no consecutive record exists of certain periods and events through which I have lived — notably those of the Leipzig Conservatory between 1857 and 1860 — and when my good friend, George W. Chadwick, argued that therefore my personal observations would be valued as completing the history of an interesting phase of musical evolution worth preserving, I began to take the matter into serious consideration.

In contradiction to my first hesitancy to write my own story I have to own that frequently, on reflecting impersonally on the subject of autobiographies, I have thought that the story of almost any life — however obscure — would be interesting if all the thoughts, feelings and influences which shaped it were faithfully recorded; indeed that it might be of far more interest than a cataloguing of a series of achievements, of adventures, and of triumphs in the lives of certain celebrities. Perhaps these reflections may have had their influence in stirring my pen into action!

I had never kept a diary, not dreaming that I should ever be called upon to narrate the story of my life, neither had I made a collection of newspaper clippings and programmes as many artists are wont to do; consequently I found myself without any written data and had to depend entirely on my own memory of events and of impressions received.

My great perplexity was — where to begin? What to select from the mass of incidents with which my life had been replete? When something whispered, "What is the first thing that you can recall? Begin with that," I did so.

It was thus that the earliest memories of my childhood became a part of my story. Tapping my memory at this point produced a flow of recollections in steady sequence, every least occurrence being so strongly visualized that it was like living through each phase of my life anew. In recording those early days in Cheltenham I was a child again; in writing of Leipzig and Berlin I was once more a student with all the agitations which then beset me; in recording my career in Italy I went through every phase of emotional excitement as vividly as though it were of yesterday; and in setting down my subsequent experiences in London and in America I felt the alternating dullness and hopefulness through which I had passed.

It has been a revelation to me of the greatest psychological interest that events of but little consequence and apparently long since forgotten should have lain buried in a subconsciousness. Truly it must be that somewhere, somehow, every thought and every act is registered in eternity, — that nothing, however insignificant, is lost!

In spite of my original reluctance, the writing of these memories has proved so absorbingly interesting to me that even if no one else should ever care to read what I have written, I should still feel amply repaid for my labour!

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MEMORIES OF A MUSICAL CAREER

"No one can know all that is in his heart until he begins to write."

Memories of a Musical Career

PRELUDE

HOW JOHN BARNETT AND ELIZA LINDLEY HAPPENED TO BE MY PARENTS

MY mother, Eliza Lindley, was the youngest of the five children of Robert Lindley, a famous violoncellist in his day.[1] The eldest, William, is said to have inherited something of his father's genius as a violoncello player, but excessive nervousness hindered him from pursuing the career of a public "virtuoso." The others, John, Mary and Emma were not musical or especially accomplished. Left motherless at a tender age, the young Lindleys were brought up by their grandmother Lindley, who, according to all accounts, must have been a rare old lady. I have often heard my mother say that all the happiness and good guidance she ever had was during her grandmother's lifetime.

To judge from report and an old miniature in my possession, my great grandmother must have been a woman of strong character, great charm, and an abundant sense of humor.

---

[1] It should be remembered that in the eighteenth century fame did not travel as far and fast as it does to-day. There were no cable despatches or reports of triumphant public appearances wired to foreign newspapers; no liners to transport "Virtuosi" across the ocean in seven days. Fame travelled chiefly in stagecoaches.

At her death, my grandfather, whose professional engagements called him constantly away from home, was forced, in his helplessness, to procure the services of a housekeeper and general factotum. It was then that the troubles of the young people began. The factotum, Miss Fletcher, was a woman past her prime, ungainly in appearance and repellent in disposition. Naturally cruel and unjust, her temper was not improved by a lameness which necessitated the use of crutches. These she not infrequently used as instruments of chastisement when her displeasure was aroused, and it is not to be wondered at that she went by the name of "The Devil on Two Sticks" in the household over which she ruled.

Robert Lindley was too much away from home on concert tours and too generally preoccupied to pay attention to any household jars. Placidly unconscious that anything was wrong he never dreamed of replacing Miss Fletcher with a better specimen of womanhood, so "The Devil on Two Sticks" was a fixture.

When the young people outgrew her rule things were different and better. My mother, Eliza, received some musical education, and at the age of sixteen, on developing a sweet voice which seemed worth cultivating — at least as an amateur — her father selected for a teacher a young musician of fast growing reputation, who, possessing in boyhood a very beautiful mezzo-soprano voice, had been celebrated as a public singer until his voice changed in adolescence to a sweet but not remarkable tenor. This was John Barnett, distinguished later as author of "The Mountain Sylph," — the first English opera in complete form ever attempted up to that time.[1] Till then English composers had confined themselves principally to writing incidental music to plays, vaudevilles and such things. In view of this pioneer work John Barnett was called "The Father of English Opera."

---

[1] His example was soon followed by Balfe and Wallace.

Eliza Lindley — not yet sixteen when she became his pupil — pretty, vivacious, and charmingly ingenuous, soon stole his heart away. They became engaged, and thus a potential father and mother for me were provided.

They could not be married at once, however, for the young composer possessed more fame than money. He had, in fact, no more than sufficed for his own immediate wants, — from hand to mouth. His income depended chiefly on fees of ten guineas each from the publishers of his songs. In those free, irresponsible bachelor days he considered the lilies how they grew, basking in the sunny companionship of congenial brother artists and men of letters, among whom were Thackeray, Cruikshanks, the famous caricaturist, Douglas Jerrold, Edwin Landseer, the elder and younger Mathews, Charles Young, the Mahew brothers, and Mark Lemon, the founder of *Punch.* When his exchequer was low and rent day was near he would write a bunch of songs, — "potboilers" he called them. It will not be out of place to note here that three of these songs — for which he received ten guineas apiece — saved from bankruptcy the publishing firm of Mayhew and Leoni-Lee, so phenomenal was their popularity. In grateful recognition of this boon, the firm presented John Barnett with a magnificent embossed silver cup. (This trophy always rested proudly on a table in our drawing-room in Cheltenham and is among my earliest recollections.)

But as the young lovers could hardly start housekeeping on a silver cup, they had to possess their souls in patience and wait! At last the lump sum of a hundred guineas was handed over to John Barnett by the publisher of "The Mountain Sylph," and on that they determined to risk matrimony.

The young husband now buckled down to work in good earnest. The success of "The Mountain Sylph" — which was performed a hundred nights in succession at Drury Lane Theatre, the Royal family being present to celebrate the hundredth performance — so stimulated his operatic vein that he composed three other operas shortly after. These were "Fair Rosamond," "Farinelli," and "Kathleen." [1]

A short time before the birth of her first child, a boy, his young wife was seized with smallpox. It proved to be a light attack from which she recovered without disfigurement, but her baby did not live. A year later my brother Domenico made his entrance into the world, and eighteen months later was born my sister Rosamond, so named after my father's second opera. (The next child did not survive birth.)

As there seemed to be a prospect of an ever-increasing family, the augmented expense of which would have to be met, my parents began to feel some anxiety as to how they would be able to make both ends meet. So they took counsel as to what was to be done. My mother, who, young as she was, grasped the situation pretty clearly, urged settling in some place where the cost of living would not be so great as in London and where my father's absence from the interesting groups of men who frequented the house — often turning night into day — would work to the advantage both of his health and energy. My father's rare charm of speech and manner, his keen wit and exhaustless fund of anecdotes, combined with a nature both receptive and sympathetic, could not fail to render him always a center of attraction to his contemporaries; therefore, my mother's common sense told her that the only thing for him to do was to break away from his too alluring surroundings.

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[1] The Opera "Kathleen" was not completed till some years later when John Barnett had settled in Cheltenham.

At that time it happened that one of his publishers told him of a splendid opening for a professor of singing in Cheltenham. Papa investigated the matter and having satisfied himself that the move would be a desirable one he wrenched himself away from his friends and took up his abode in Cheltenham. It was there I was born.

At that period Cheltenham was a fashionable watering place, — its aristocracy made up largely of wealthy people who had lived in India long enough to become victims of liver complaint. These were attracted to Cheltenham because of the curative properties of its mineral springs. The gardens fronting Pitville Spa were generally alive with the gay crowds which assembled there to drink of its waters. Another attraction was the high reputation of its colleges and schools. Thus the nabobs could rejoice in the assurance that their children were obtaining a superior education while they, the parents, were tending their congested livers.

The town itself presented a wealth of delightful residences set in sizable flower gardens, and many terraces and rows of handsome houses abutted on a broad and dignified Promenade sheltered by fine trees. It certainly was an attractive town, framed by the Cotteswold hills to the south, the Malvern hills to the west, and the soft, green undulations of Presbury, Marl and

Aggs hills, all of which in their turn became the scenes of many joyous rambles for us children in quest of wild flowers and berries.

Cheltenham, however, was certainly not an artistic centre. Music was regarded as an accomplishment proper to the upper classes and therefore, of course, there had to be music teachers, but the divine spark which might lurk within the shell of the music teacher was doomed forever to remain an unknown quantity.

Is it then to be wondered at that my father could find no kindred spirits, and that for lack of opportunity to indulge his naturally genial and companionable disposition he fell into the extreme of avoiding all social intercourse? One of the very few residents who frequented our house was a Doctor Ker, — a fine specimen of a Scotch gentleman, and the first and only practitioner of Homeopathy who had ventured to settle in Cheltenham. My father and he were mutually attracted to each other because it happened that my father had read Hanaman's treatise on Homeopathy and had become deeply interested in the new theory of *Similia Similibus Curanter.* Frequent discussions with Doctor Ker led to his belief in its soundness and ended in his adopting Homeopathy both for himself and his household. He furnished himself with a portable medicine case in which the entire pharmacopoeia was represented in tiny bottles of globules. From that time forward neither drugs nor spirits of any kind found their way to our house.

Another frequenter of my father's study was a Mr. Waite, a librarian who used to bring him tidings of any new and important publications. Mr. Waite was a "Freethinker," — a term to be whispered in secret places with bated breath lest it should taint the air.

He and my father used to discuss the various articles which appeared in a serial called *The Reasoner*, the purpose of which was to deal destruction to religious dogma, "The Vestiges of Creation" by Chambers, and other works which preceded Darwin's great work on evolution.

The seances in my father's study were somewhat disturbing to my mother, who was timidly conservative enough to dread the slightest innovation which might tend to unsettle religious faith. I remember hearing her implore my father not to read Darwin's "Origin of Species" which Mr. Waite had brought for their mutual delectation.

Our education was not conducted in the customary way but according to my father's own ideas. The problem of our early education was solved by engaging a resident governess, who received twenty guineas a year for her services. When Domenico and Rosamond outgrew her ministrations they were sent to a day school for a year or more, and afterwards a tutor was engaged to devote three hours daily to their instruction besides that of my brother, Julius, my junior by eighteen months, and myself. This plan had the twofold advantage of economy and of allowing time for our music.

There was no teacher in Cheltenham to whom my father was willing to entrust our musical grounding, therefore it devolved on my mother to teach us the rudiments of music and to superintend our practice.

There are musicians who are not musical as there are also musical people who are not musicians. My mother belonged to the latter class. She had made no study of thorough-bass and had never had much musical training, but she was naturally endowed with a musical ear and excellent musical intuition, therefore she was better qualified to undertake our early musical training than any of the professional teachers that Cheltenham could boast at that time. When we were sufficiently advanced to play classical music my father took us in hand.

It was with him a foregone conclusion that we were to achieve great things, for did we not inherit music on both sides of the house? Both from my mother's father, Robert Lindley, and from his own ancestors? Did there not flow in our veins that admixture of blood so favorable to precocious talent?[1] Moreover, had he himself not been a child wonder as a singer before he won fame for himself as a composer? He certainly had something on which to build his hopes, but he unconsciously looked for fruition before the bud had had time to unfold.

As I look back I can see how his self-imposed banishment from public life and congenial intercourse with the outer world in exchange for the life of a musical drudge in a narrow environment gradually told on his sensitive temperament. It seemed to him that by living out of the world, the world was forgetting him, and the morbid feelings of a disappointed man began to creep little by little into his spirit. He sometimes waxed bitter when some musical upstart was lauded in the London papers, or when some musical charlatan asserted some new theory that was more commercial than artistic. Too often on these occasions was he tempted to write trenchant letters of protest to *The Times*, for he had a wholesome loathing for shams. A facile pen and a fatal genius for diatribe procured for him in due course some enemies among the rising generation. The sum of these would have been greatly augmented but for the wise intervention of my mother, to whom he always referred these scathing literary productions. How often have I heard her say, "John, it is very clever, but I would advise you not to send it till you have slept on it." He often took her advice, with the result that many letters in which he had not only vented but also exhausted his indignation were never sent. Thus was he spared many controversies, which, while he would have entered into them with zest, were far better avoided.

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[1] His father was German, his mother Hungarian, a great uncle of his was a Polish rabbi, and the renowned composer, Meyerbeer, was a second cousin.

It is surprising that my father, in spite of his sequestered life, was not really forgotten by the musical world. He was constantly receiving marks of the high esteem in which he was held, and his publishers were always eager to obtain every least thing from his pen. Verses were sent to him by various publishers from all sources for him to set to music, but always with the stipulation that they should contain no musical flights beyond the powers of the purchasing amateur! These songs were the ones he called "potboilers," and, alas — there were over two thousand of them! But they provided a considerable proportion of his income and there were all of us children to feed, clothe, and educate on nothing a year but the precarious product of his brain.

When one comes to think of all that he accomplished, when one recalls his courage, devotion and self-immolation, how can one fail to bow down in reverence to his memory?

PART I

CHILD MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

FIRST IMPRESSIONS — A GREAT EVENT — A MYSTERY — A TRIUMPH — MARKETING WITH MOTHER — PREFERENCES — THE BROKEN PROMISE — AT THE SEASHORE — THE SAD-FACED LADY AND THE ROCKING-HORSE — BREAD AND HONEY

THE first event in my life that I remember vividly was being taken by my mother to our druggist to have a tooth pulled. She had promised me sixpence as a reward if I would not cry or squirm, so I went willingly enough, — rather proud of the importance attached to the occasion and of the covertly suggested heroism I was to display.

As I think back I can see the shop now with its three large oval glass jars, green, red and blue respectively, in the window. It was a conspicuous corner shop off the principal street in Cheltenham, and my nurse used to say that the proprietor, Mr. Gunston, was "quite the gentleman." Into his hands was I delivered. He had a nice rosy, clean-shaven face and his dark brown hair was neatly plastered back behind his ears with some shiny and sweet-smelling stuff. He took me by the hand, looked kindly in my face, and said in a half whisper and with a knowing glance at Mamma, "She's the flower of the flock!" — a remark over which I pondered much thereafter, but the mystery contained in those words I could never, never fathom.

He led me behind the counter, and I saw him secrete some shiny thing up his sleeve; then he said in a persuasive voice, "Let's look in your mouth, pretty one."

I submitted, but I did not like the taste of his fingers when he held my mouth open and shrank away from him.

"There, pet, it didn't hurt much, did it?" quoth he, as an involuntary tear rolled down my cheek at the sudden wrench.

"I didn't cry, did I?" was my eager response.

"No, you were a brave little girl," said he, patting me on the cheek, and offering me a glass of water and a little china bowl.

My eyes followed him eagerly as he proceeded to remove the stopper from a broad glass jar on a shelf, taking from it a little twisted stick of something yellow and transparent like glass, which fairly made my mouth water, — only to look at it. He held it towards me; I took it hesitatingly, for Mamma looked as if she were going to shake her head.

"It's pure barley sugar," said he reassuringly, in answer to the expression on Mamma's face, — candy being a forbidden joy in our family. She looked doubtfully from him to me and, as I thought, a little relentingly.

Following her expression, interpreted in my own way, the barley sugar somehow found its way to my mouth, and I can never forget that first good suck and my surprise, when I drew it out of my lacerated mouth for inspection, that the top of it had turned red.

What an eventful day it had been! I had had my first tooth pulled; I had "behaved like a little lady," so Mr. Gunston had said; I was also the "flower of the flock," and that might mean something very important! I had tasted barley sugar for the first time. And the sixpence was mine!

It was always a great delight to go to market with Mamma, but I had my preferences as to shops. I didn't like the butcher's shop, although the young men who served there had nice pink faces. I found it tiresome to wait in the little counting room behind the shop, where Miss Page, the butcher's oldest daughter, sat on a very high stool before a desk, writing and pouring sand over the paper. She was not pink and plump like the butcher boys, but long and lean and rather yellow with three dark curls in front, fastened with little combs over her ears. She was always very polite to Mamma, whose name she repeated at the end of every sentence. "Yes, Mrs. Barnett; no, Mrs. Barnett; just so, Mrs. Barnett," and she always bent over sideways from her high stool to say things to me; but I never paid much attention to her because she raised her voice in such a silly way when she spoke to me. I preferred to look at the brightly burning coals in the tiny little grate (there was always a fire in the counting house, even in summer). When Mamma laid down a piece of money to pay for the dinner and Miss Page handed her back sometimes three or four coins in exchange, I was greatly puzzled.

Once I asked Mamma, "Why did Miss Page give you all that money back?"

"That was the change, dear."

"Did she like your money best that she wanted to pay you for it?"

"No, child. I gave her a sovereign, which was more than I owed her, and she gave me back the change in silver."

That was something quite beyond me and a new thing for me to ponder, like the cryptic meaning of "the flower of the flock." I liked to go to the grocer because he used to give me figs and raisins, and sometimes gingerbread nuts. But the shop I loved best of all was the green-grocer's, where Mamma bought her vegetables. It was an open shop without any windows, and I used to stand outside and look longingly at the red and green gooseberries, and red and white currants, plums, greengages, and pears.

The shopkeeper was Mrs. Moss; she was a nice, round, comfortable person; and I liked the way she always kept her mouth open so that I could see two long front teeth which stood alone and bobbed backwards and forwards when she talked; I liked to watch them bob! She never said, "Yes, Mum," like the other tradespeople; she always said "Yes, rum," and do you know I soon found out why, for I tried one day to say "Yes, mum," with my mouth open and I couldn't. I had to say "Yes, rum," just like Mrs. Moss. I supposed she kept her mouth open to show those two long teeth. I didn't think the teeth were pretty, you know, but they were very amusing! After she had sold her vegetables to Mamma, she used to come to the front of the shop and pinch some nice little green and brown pears, then she would pick out one and offer it to me. "Have a 'purr' darlin'," she would say. One day she gave me a large red plum, — it was the biggest I had ever seen, — but Mamma took it out of my hand, saying that it was not ripe enough for me to eat. I was ready to cry with disappointment till she comforted me by promising to buy me a whole pint of damsons — all to myself — as soon as ripe ones would be in the market. Of course the thought of the damsons, which I had never tasted, quite made up for the loss of the plum. But I never got that pint of damsons! And the thought of that broken promise has rankled ever since!

Every summer we were taken to the seashore to some lovely place where there were hills or mountains as well as the sea, for change of air and sea bathing. My sister, Rosie, and I used to count the days a month before the time came. Towards the last we began to count the hours. When we went to bed on the night before starting, we were always so excited that we could not sleep. We made out, by counting on our fingers, that from eight in the evening till six o'clock next morning would be ten hours; and then the large yellow omnibus from the Plough Hotel would come up to the door to fetch us, and off we'd go to the station, when it would be puff, puff, puff, till we reached the seaside place where we were to stop. Perhaps we might find some quite new sorts of shells there! And seaweeds! Should we find them on the beach and in the pools among the rocks, as we did at the last place? These were the important questions that kept us awake.

The first place I have any recollection of was the Isle of Man, and I cannot tell you much about it because I was very little when I went there. I can only recall a long stretch of sandy beach, from which the sea seemed to go a long way off once every day. We used to ride on donkeys, and there was a basket chair on my donkey into which I was strapped, but brother Dom and Rosie rode on theirs without chairs. There were two cats without any tails where we lived; they were called Manx cats. They were not friends of mine, though. I did not think they were as pretty as the un-Manx cats, and they didn't like to stand still and be stroked, so I did not take much notice of them!

Every morning, before breakfast, nurse used to take us to see the fishermen haul in their nets. It was great fun, for there were all sorts of things beside fish in them; big shells that were alive inside, and sea-eggs which the fishermen always let us have. They also used to give each of us a fish all to ourselves to take home. Mostly gurnets, which, I thought, were the handsomest of all the fish they caught, because they were bright red instead of the dull gray of the soles, brills, and turbots. It is true that the gurnets had very large heads and not at all an agreeable expression — their eyes bulged so dreadfully and they always looked so angry — but we did not mind that, as their heads were taken off before they were fried for breakfast. We used always to think that the fish we brought home was much nicer than that which Mamma bought for dinner.

The only other thing that I remember about the Isle of Man is that we used often to pass a row of pretty cottages, and that a lady with a kind face frequently came out of one of them to speak with Mamma, while she stroked my face and patted me. But somehow when she looked at me, it always made me feel sad! At first she offered me sweetmeats, but Mamma said I mustn't have them; then she gave me a beautiful bunch of flowers out of her garden. At last one day she asked Mamma if she might keep me with her till she came back from market? When Mamma said she might, the lady led me into her house, and what should I see at one end of the parlour but a splendid rocking-horse with a long mane and tail.

She put me on its back, and I started at once on a long journey. I went to all sorts of places, the pictures of which I had seen in a book called "Scenes in Foreign Lands," where there were lions and tigers, elephants, leopards, and all kinds of wild beasts. I felt sure that not many little girls of my age had ever had a chance to visit so many strange places and see such queer things! When I came home from my travels, the lady lifted me off the horse, and she looked at me as if she wanted me for her little girl.

"Do you like bread and honey?" she said.

"I don't know," I answered.

Then she went to a cupboard and spread something yellow and sticky on a nice slice of bread. She sprinkled some brown sugar on it, put some jam over that, and gave it to me. It was very sweet, but it tasted good! Before I had half finished it, Mamma was standing at the gate with Rosie and Dom. The kind lady led me out, put her arms around me and squeezed me so tight that a tear rolled down one of her cheeks. Somehow I felt so sorry for the poor lady that I did not want the rest of my bread and honey.

CHAPTER II

LEARNING TO READ — A SOUL ABOVE POTHOOKS — THE FIRST MUSIC LESSON — A WONDERFUL SISTER — SECRET ASPIRATIONS — A FIRST ATTEMPT AT COMPOSITION — INSULAR SNOBBISHNESS

I CAN just remember sitting up at a table in a high chair, when the time came for me to learn to read a large flat book open between my teacher and me. He kept a little cardboard box of sweets beside him, and when Mamma, on the first day, looked at it with suspicion, he told her that it was Scotch mixture and "quite pure." After he had made me repeat the names of some large, black letters in the book, he put a sugarplum over each letter, and as soon as I told him the name of the letter I was to have the sugarplum. That is about all I remember of learning to read! But I recall how painfully hard it was for me to make pothooks and things in a copy book! I never could manage to make two alike, and I could not bear the looks of them! Rosie's copy book always looked neat and regular, while mine was all straggly and uneven. I could not see why I should have to do such tiresome, ugly work! Besides, I did not like sitting up at the table for such a long while. I longed to be at the piano in Papa's study, playing things out of my own head.

One day I heard Mamma say to Papa, "I can't keep the child away from the piano; don't you think I might as well teach her her notes?"

"Isn't she too young?" asked Papa. "Let me see, how old is she?"

"Only four and a half, but what does that matter? She is always singing about the house when she is not at the piano, and she might as well learn to read music, as she doesn't seem to care for anything else," said Mamma.

Next day, when I was playing to myself in the study, Mamma came in and sat beside me at the piano. She put on the desk before me a large book with a brown cover, which she called "The Instruction Book," saying, "Now, my dear, I am going to teach you your notes."

I did not feel glad at first: I thought I would rather be let alone. But when I found that there was a name for every one of those round things, some of them on the lines, some in between, some over and some under, and that I could pick them out on the piano and hear the sound of them, I was so pleased that it seemed as if I could go on picking them out for ever. After that Mamma used to teach me every day for an hour, but I used to stay at the piano of my own accord a long time after she left me.

One day I gave her a big surprise. I played a whole tune out of the Instruction Book, which I had picked out quite by myself. I learned two or three new tunes every day, and very soon Mamma called Rosie in and allowed us to play some duets together. Of course, this was a great honour, because Rosie had been learning to play for more than a year. But although I felt proud to be playing with her, I did not care so very much for duets after all! It was much nicer to have the whole piano to myself and to play down in the bass, or up in the treble, whenever I pleased. I did not find it pleasant to have only a bit of the piano portioned off to me.

Rosie (her real name was Rosamond) was quite a big girl; more than seven years old. She used to read books all to herself and I had a great respect for her for being so clever and so "advanced for her age," as Mamma called it. Papa gave her a volume of Mrs. Hemans' poems, and she used to go off into a corner to read them, and would often repeat some of them without the book.

She actually composed a piece of poetry herself one day, and my brother Dom said you would never know the difference between it and one of Mrs. Hemans'. I thought it was very wonderful for Rosie to write poetry, and I admired her for it, but somehow I did not think I should ever care to do it myself!

My secret desire was to write a piece of music. I had already composed one at the piano. The tune was all on top, and the notes below moved in and out and up and down like the waves. Oh, how happy I was when I was playing it to myself! How I used to lean and lean on the tune notes to give expression! But how to write it down? That was the question! For, of course, you could not call anything a piece of music that was not written down on paper! I thought and thought about it, and puzzled and puzzled over the way I should set about it.

At last, one day after I had been playing my composition over to myself, what should I find, sticking out of the top of Papa's waste-basket, but a sheet of real music paper. I pulled it out and saw that there was music written only on one side of it, where it had been scratched out and blotted; on the other side it was just clean ruled music paper. I carried my treasure to the piano in a fever of excitement and began to write in pencil just the notes of the tune. This took me a long time, for I had often to stop and count the lines and spaces to make sure. But when it came to the quick wiggly notes underneath and in the bass I did not know what to do. Then it came into my head that if I looked over some pieces of printed music I might find something of the same pattern as mine. So I went to work and drew out from the book-shelf of piano music piece after piece, till I came upon something that I thought would do. I copied the lines and strokes, the dots and the rests, just as they were in the printed piece, and when it came to putting in the notes I wrote the same ones that I was accustomed to play to myself. I did this for several days when no one was near, and at last I had covered my sheet of paper.

"Why, what's this?" said Papa one day, picking it up where it had fallen out of the printed music-book in which I had hidden it. "Who wrote this?"

"I did," I said, feeling shy and guilty.

"You did? *You?*" cried Papa with surprise.

"Yes," I said, hanging my head. "I composed it first, and I found the right pattern in this," handing him a thin book of music and pointing to the first page.

He stared at me, then at my composition, and then he looked again at the printed music. "Did you know," he asked, "that it is a 'Song without Words' by Mendelssohn?"

"No, I didn't," I answered. "I was only looking for the right pattern!"

There was a queer look in his face, — as if he wanted to laugh, but thought it would not be proper. Just at that moment Mamma was passing the study door.

"Come here, Eliza, I want to show you something," he said.

Then they spoke together so low that I could not hear what they said, but when Mamma turned and looked at me, I saw that her eyes were wet, and I wondered why.

One summer we went to Tenby, in South Wales. What fun we used to have on the sands there, digging cellars and dungeons, then building a prison on top. We used also to make parks and gardens with lakes and ponds, and sail paper boats on the lakes. Sometimes there was a wreck, and we had to save the crew in small boats. Dom was the handiest at this, — he made the boats himself and did most of the hard work.

There were beautiful shells on the beach, and Rosie and I used to gather quantities of them. Papa showed us the pictures and the names of them in a book, but we had invented names for all of them ourselves, and we liked our own names best.

We nearly always went down to help the fishermen haul in their nets and we were of great assistance to them. They had to own up that they could not have got along without us! I wish you could have seen the large purple crabs. The crawfish, the flounders, and also the red gurnets they used to give us because they were so grateful for our help!

One of the things I liked best was bathing in the sea. Papa used to hire a bathing machine which looked like an omnibus painted white. There were wooden steps to go up into it, and there were long wooden benches inside. As soon as Mamma and nurse had undressed us, a man came with a horse which he tied on to the machine, and we were dragged right out into the sea so far that the steps of the machine were under water. Then a red-faced, fat woman in a dark blue woollen dress who was walking about in the water came up the steps, took us one by one in her thick arms and dipped us three times in the sea. Then she put us back in the machine where we were rubbed dry, — our hair twisted up in a towel to wring the water out of it and our clothes put on again. Presently the horse was attached to the other end of the machine to drag us back on to the sands. Generally, before we were quite dressed, the fat woman banged at the door of the machine and called out, "Are you nearly ready, Mum? There's another party a' waitin', Mum." Then out we tumbled as fast as we could, scampering away over the sands like mad things! Papa and Dom had a machine to themselves, and Dom told us secretly that they didn't wear bathing gowns like girls!

One day, while we were making "Hyde Park" in the sand, two sweet little girls came up and stood looking at us as if they wished they could make a park like ours. They had on such pretty pink frocks and white sunbonnets, and looked so sweet, I longed to have them for playmates. Rosie spoke up and said, "Wouldn't you like to help make our park? You may dig the lake over here while I build a boathouse. Take my spade!" So the little girls began digging and we were all very happy together, for we could show them how to do lots of things that they didn't know about, and they thought we were very clever. So we swore to be friends for life, and agreed together to make a whole village tomorrow, with a church steeple and all, and we were to invent something new for every day! Just as we were swearing friendship, up came their maid; she looked very cross and severe.

"What are you doing here?" she cried. "Miss Madeline, you ought to know better; hasn't your Mamma told you not to play with strange children on the sands? You'll be punished for this!"

Whereat, Lilian, who was the smaller — and my particular friend — began to cry, but Madeline got red in the face and stamped her foot, crying, "These are not strange children; they are our sworn friends. Why shouldn't we play with them when we like them so much?"

"Because they are not gentlefolks like you; their father's only a music-master and he works for his living!"

With that she took them roughly by the hand and dragged them off. We could hear her scolding and little Lilian crying till they were almost out of sight. We sat still for a minute and then we both started up with, "Let's not play any more. Let's go home."

Papa and Mamma were in the sitting-room when we came in and Rosie went up to Papa and said, "Papa, is it a disgrace to work for your living?" I chimed in, "Did you know that a music-master isn't a gentleman?"

"What on earth are the children talking about?" said Mamma. Then they asked us where we had been and we told them all about our building "Hyde Park" in the sands, the little girls, and the cross maid. At the thought of our lost friends I began to cry. Mamma tried to comfort me and Papa stroked my cheek. He gave a look at Mamma and I heard him say under his breath, "Infernal snobs!" I didn't know what that meant. Rosie said she didn't either, and somehow we didn't like to ask!

CHAPTER III

A MYSTERY SOLVED — HOW THREE AND THREE MADE TWELVE — TROUBLES OF CHILDHOOD — REFLECTIONS

WHEN the lease of whatever house we were occupying was about to run out, it was always necessary to seek for a larger one to accommodate our ever increasing family. Of the house in which I was born (Clifton House, I think it was called) I have only a faint recollection. Mamma used to say that it was impossible for me to remember it at all as I was only about three years old when we moved to Sussex House, our second abode in Cheltenham. She always accused me of romancing when I recalled anything that happened before that time. "Nonsense, child," she would exclaim. "You were only eighteen months old when that happened. You could not possibly remember it!"

"But I *do* remember it," I would answer tearfully. "I remember distinctly sitting in my high baby-chair with a bar across it in front to prevent me from tumbling out, and singing,

'Gaily the Troubadour touched his guitar,
As he was hastening home from the war.'"

(By the way I always thought that "Gaily" was the name of the Troubadour!)

I remember hearing Mamma tell people that I could sing and talk before I could walk, and that I was a born chatterbox. But she would never believe me when I reminded her of these things, although she owned that as facts they were true! It was always, "You must have dreamt it," when it was not "You are romancing!"

It was very hard to have everything I told doubted or contradicted when I knew I was telling the truth, and oh, how I wished I could do something to make Mamma and the others who laughed at my stories feel how unpleasant it was to be treated so! There were times when I felt quite wicked and resentful and I longed to make them smart for it! Nobody ever behaved so disrespectfully to either Rosie or Domenico when they had anything to say! They were never doubted or laughed at. It was only I who was the victim!

A great many important things happened after we went to live at Sussex House. It was a nice white house in a row with five or six others like it, and there was a good long strip of garden at the back for us to play in. We had a dog too, whose name was Turp; he was rather a large dog, with a smooth and glossy black skin, large, brown eyes, and a very kind face. He went everywhere with us, and we loved him dearly! He was my only companion, for there was no one for me to play with. Domenico and Rosie were much older than I. You see, Rosie was six years old, all but three months, when I was only three years old, and Dom was nearly eight at that time. Then they both went to school and had their lessons to learn at home. Julius was only a year and a half old and was not much company. So there was nothing for me to do but wander about and make up stories all to myself. Some of these I would tell to Turp, who used to sit very still and look up into my face with a very wise expression. I used to talk to him a great deal, giving him much good advice! But sometimes I longed for other company. I should have liked to be with Mamma — to sit in her lap and have her stroke my face and kiss me and call me "her little girl" — but I was nearly always told I must not bother her, for she was not well and must be kept quiet. Papa used to kiss Rosie and me every morning before he went out, and sometimes he would jump me and let me pull his hair, but I was always put to bed before he came home in the evening, and the days were very long! Nurse was always mending socks or something, so there was nothing for me to do but sit on the footstool and tell her stories. When I would tell a real good one with a big surprise in it she would say, "Oh, my!"

She liked to have me tell her about the things that I said I remembered as happening to me before I was Mamma's baby, when I lived in Doctor Fricker's house with a lot of other children from Babyland. Doctor Fricker used to collect babies, you see, so as to have them ready for any of the ladies he attended who might want to have babies. Very strange things used to take place in that house! Things that could not happen anywhere else, for, of course, after the Doctor had taken one of the Babyland children to a lady for her to keep and to nurse as her own baby, everything became different from what it was at Doctor Fricker's.

Once in a while Rosie and Dom used to come and listen when I was telling some of these wonderful things, for they were too old to remember anything that happened to them before they were Mamma's babies. I am sure they often felt sorry that they were not at Doctor Fricker's at the same time that I was, when I was describing all the fun that used to go on, and how there was something doing all the time.

When Rosie and I got off by ourselves, later on, we used to talk a good deal about babies. There were some things, you see, that we could not make out! For instance, how and when babies were brought to the house? That was the question! First, Rosie would guess, then I would guess. Nurse said they were brought in boxes by the doctor. But what kind of boxes were they, and what became of those boxes afterwards, we wanted to know? But we could not get nurse to tell us; she would say: "Oh, go along, you want to know too much!"

At last one day, Rosie and I found the boxes! We were poking around upstairs in the attic, and behold, what did we see but four wooden boxes, just about large enough to hold a very small baby, and printed on top of them in large letters was "Lemann." Rosie said she was sure that "Le" meant "the" in French, and as for Man, everybody knows that when a baby boy grows up he is a Man! So, you see, there could not be any doubt! "The Man" was what it meant. Four boxes made just one for each baby! That settled it! There were some other things printed in smaller letters on the box, I think it was "Tops and Bottoms," [1] and something else that even Rosie could not make out, but it did not matter, for we had already our proofs! Now we felt very proud to have found out for ourselves something that nobody would tell us. But we swore secrecy; not a soul was to know what we had discovered.

Soon after this, "old Nurse," as we used to call her, came to stay at our house for a month. We were always glad when she came. She called us "her precious babies," and she used to give us large round, white peppermint lozenges out of her apron pocket on the sly! (They were about the only sweets we ever got!) One day she came into the nursery on tiptoe, and putting her finger to her lips, she said, "Children, you must promise to keep very quiet to-day, there must be no noise to disturb Mamma; Master Domenico, mind you don't play on the piano. Don't forget now! Stay in the nursery, and Miss Clara — meaning me — will tell you one of her long yarns; you must be quiet as mice!" Nurse had on soft slippers and she tried to step gingerly, which seemed very difficult, for she was so fat and heavy, and the stairs *would* creak somehow.

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[1] A sort of rusk manufactured by Lemann from which infant's "pap" was made.

As soon as her back was turned we crept out of the nursery on tiptoe, and leaned over the banisters, when lo and behold, who should we see coming upstairs in a hurry, and very red in the face, but Doctor Fricker! Rosie looked at me, and I looked at her in wondering silence; then Dom spluttered out, "I know what's up! — There's to be a new baby! Gosh, I hope it's to be a boy!" Rosie and I said nothing, for Dom wasn't in our secret; but we watched our opportunity and crawled quietly up into the attic to count the Lemann boxes. There were still only four, and Oh, I was ready to cry with disappointment! Rosie also looked rather blank at first, but suddenly she tossed her head and said, "How silly! Of course the new box is downstairs in Mamma's room, and it isn't opened yet!"

Papa never dined with us except on Sundays. We had dinner with Mamma in the middle of the day on week days. She never was so happy as when we ate with ravenous appetites. She always wanted us to eat plenty of meat to make us strong. Domenico, Rosie and Julius used to satisfy her, but she was constantly complaining that I did not "eat enough to keep a sparrow alive." The truth is I did not care for meat; I liked puddings best. I am afraid I used to vex Mamma a great deal at times, for I was terribly sensitive, and when she had either said or done something to displease me I refused to eat anything, even pudding! That was my way of getting even with her. She would get quite angry with me at times and try to force me to eat, because she said it was "only temper," but I always remained obstinate and never gave in until she showed me how sorry she was and began to coax me. When she complained of me to Papa, who always came home in the evening and had a nice little cosy dinner all to himself, he would frown and look severe and call me "Miss." All four of us used to shrink away from him when he was in one of his scolding humours, — and indeed we all of us used to get scolded quite often! But when Papa was in good temper, he would laugh and joke, and tell us wonderful stories which he invented himself. At such times he would let us pull him about and do all sorts of things to him.

One evening when Rosie and I were stroking his head as he sat back in his armchair, after his dinner, we discovered in the midst of his thick, glossy black hair a few white ones, at which we were much excited! He told us to pull them out, and he would give us a penny a dozen for them. At this Rosie and I went to work with a will. We repeated the quest on other occasions when we were short of pocket money, and when Papa was in a gay humour. At first we earned our pennies rather easily, but soon the white hairs became so scarce that it was hard work to make out a dozen between us. So we agreed that if a hair broke and we had to pull twice, it should count for two hairs, and strange to say they nearly always did break!

We were not allowed much pocket money at any time because, although Mamma was not quite so strict about letting us eat sweets as she used to be, still she did not approve our buying them. We did not have much temptation to spend money, however, for when we went out for a walk, we always preferred to take country walks. There was Marl Hill, and Aggs Hill, and Prestbury and Leckhampton, — all of them lovely walks. We knew where to find all the different wild flowers in their season; the white, pink, and purple sweet violets, and the pale yellow primroses which stood up so straight in large tufts on the soft grassy banks. And we knew meadows where the cowslips grew, — millions of them! Jenny taught us to pick off their bunchy tops and make balls of them by laying them across a string and tying them up so that the yellow blossoms peeping out of their pale green pods looked like a globe of gold. We used to throw them and try to hit each other under the nose with them, and I can never forget the honey-sweet scent of those cowslip balls when they hit us on the mouth! There was one woodsy place at the top of Aggs hill where the ground was blue with wild hyacinths in the early spring, — we called them bluebells and we always knew when it was time to go and get them. Then towards autumn, when we came back from the seashore, there were blackberries. We knew all the hedges where they grew thickest and largest. You should have seen what a sight we were when we came home from our blackberrying expeditions — all scratched to pieces — with black lips and stained faces, tired as dogs, but drunk with excitement, each of us bringing home a basket of berries for Mamma and Papa, as a peace offering, for we nearly always stayed out much longer than we should have done and were often late for meals. This used to trouble Mamma dreadfully, especially when she was not feeling well. She used to get very nervous about us, although there was no fear at all of any harm coming to us, for we were quite able to take care of ourselves. We often found her in tears when we got home, and there were times when she would cry and laugh at the same time so that we got quite frightened. We did not understand the reason why she was so terribly upset at one time when we came home late with wet feet, while perhaps the week before when we returned in a worse plight she hardly scolded us at all. Of course we always felt guilty at such times because we knew that it was a great trouble to have our shoes and stockings changed while dinner or tea was kept waiting on our account. But somehow we did not seem able to help it! We just *had* to get into mischief! When we were off on our country tramps, we were like wild things. We took no heed of anything save the birds and the flowers. We lost all count of time; hours were as minutes, until all of a sudden it would come across one or the other of us that it must be getting late, and then we would take to our heels and run most of the way home as hard as we could pelt!

We were, of course, too young to understand that Mamma's unreasonable excitability and spasmodic severity with us was due to a state of health incidental to a constant increase of family.[1] To be told that she was at times "hysterical" and that "we must not mind" meant nothing to us. We could only feel the smart of injustice, taking it always quite seriously and pitying ourselves as its helpless victims!

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[1] My mother bore fourteen children, several of whom died at birth, and others in infancy. Only six of us lived past maturity.

I suppose that all children have had their unhappy periods — times when they felt themselves bitterly wronged, unjustly accused — and that our childish sorrows were no harder to bear than those of many other children, though perhaps somewhat different in kind.

In the days of which I write no sympathetic "Studies of Child Nature" had found their way to the domestic hearth; children were expected to behave like well-balanced, reasonable beings, and when the natural wild animal asserted itself in lawlessness and irresponsibility it had to be squeezed, or cudgelled out of them!

CHAPTER IV

A BITTER ENDING TO A GLORIOUS DAY — DISOWNED — ADVENTURES AT "THE CASTLE" — MAGNANIMITY — RECONCILIATION

ONE day we started off for a long tramp. We intended it to be a sort of exploring expedition. We had, up to that time, never gone any farther than to the top of Aggs Hill, but we had often looked longingly toward a second hill beyond, on the same road, which had seemed too far for us to attempt lest we should be late for dinner and get into trouble. This time, however, we were determined to put the best foot forward and risk it. Beyond the top of the first hill there was something new and exciting for us at every turn of the road. Fields and woods — all untrodden ground — and what was more, every turn brought us nearer to a large gray-stone turreted mansion situated on top of a green slope surrounded by trees. This mansion had always seemed a sort of unattainable goal, it appeared to be so far away, and somehow it always suggested to us romance.

We had not the least idea who lived there, but we were constantly speculating about the lives of its inmates and what might be going on within its walls. We called it "The Castle," and it gradually became to us a stage for many a thrilling drama; we never tired of inventing stories about it. This day of days we hoped that we might be able at least to get near enough to see what the grounds were like, so with each turn of the road we were tempted to go on to the next. Suddenly there was a diversion, for on looking to the left, we spied in a meadow some wonderful yellow flowers, the like of which we had never seen.

The sight was too much for us. Over the fence we climbed, and down the grassy slope we ran to the golden patch which allured us. As we approached with some difficulty, for the grass grew more and more rank and tall, we began to see that they looked like very large buttercups, only the stems and leaves were much thicker, stronger, and more juicy. "What can they be?" we cried. "Let's call them 'Queen Buttercups,'" said I, and in a fever of excitement we began picking them as fast as we could. So eager were we that we hardly noticed that our feet were sinking deeper and deeper into the soil, which was boggy and black. But by the time we had gathered as many as we could carry, it was all we could do to pull our feet out of the bog and climb up on to dry turf. When we succeeded in doing so, what a sight were we! Our shoes and stockings were covered with sticky black mud up to the calves of our legs. All at once the thought that it was getting late and that we were a long way from home seized upon us, and in a panic all four of us started with one accord down the hill on the dead run. We were so full of the joyful anticipation of how surprised Mamma would be to see our wonderful "Queen Buttercups" that we quite forgot how much of the bog we were carrying home on our shoes and stockings.

When at last we reached the house, heated and breathless, we found Mamma seated at the dinner table, looking awfully grieved and very stern. Dinner had been waiting for more than half an hour! She did not speak at first, she only looked grave, but when she saw what a muddy mess we were in, that was the last straw; she burst into tears, threw up her arms and sobbed out that we were bad, worthless children — that henceforth we were no children of hers — that she disowned us. At this we wept aloud, and our poor Queen Buttercups, which we had held tight in our little, hot hands, fell to the floor in a limp mass, their golden glory gone forever! Where, oh, where was the joyful surprise they were to bring to Mamma? What an ending was this to our day of sunshine and adventure!

We were broken-hearted, and although we had been as hungry as hunters on our way home, we none of us wanted any dinner now. This fretted Mamma still more, and at last she grew so excited that we began to feel frightened.

Our nurse, who had followed us to the door of the dining room when we came, now entered and led us quickly away. She took us upstairs into the nursery and pulled off our grimy shoes and stockings with spiteful little jerks that made us wince. Yet I was sure she felt sorry for us, for she said: "Never mind, don't cry, your Mamma isn't really as angry as she seemed, you know; she's not well, and she's hysterical."

"But she disowned us!" we cried, "and now we have no mother!"

We were undressed and put to bed, for nurse thought it best to keep us away from Mamma. She offered to bring us food, but we refused to eat. When we were left alone and had cried our eyes out, Rosie and I began to talk calmly over the situation, which we felt to be very serious. We were disowned, motherless, and consequently homeless. What should we do; whither should we go? We must take action at once. We had ceased to weep and had grown very sober and thoughtful.

Rosie said, "Let us think where to take refuge! — Who will shelter two poor, abandoned little girls?"

Then I was suddenly struck with an inspiration. "Let us go to the Castle!" I cried.

We agreed at once that was the one and only solution of our problem. We now began to discuss ways and means, picturing how it was all to happen. We would get up at break of day, dress very carefully, putting on nice clean frocks and our best shoes and stockings, and creep quietly out of the house before any one was up. Once outside we would look towards the room where our parents were sleeping and say: "Farewell then, forever. Although discarded by you, we shall always wish you well, but there will come a day when remorse will seize you at having cast out two innocent children to seek a home among strangers. But it will then be too late!"

We began to think we might be in danger of starving on the way to the Castle, for the road was long, — we could not tell how long. So we resolved that if nurse should come again to offer us food we would not reject it. We would eat of it sparingly, just enough to keep body and soul together, and secrete the rest. In the morning we would tie it up in a handkerchief and carry it with us to sustain us on our long tramp. Arrived at the Castle, weary and footsore, the man servant would of course refuse to admit us without stating our business. But of course we could not consent to tell a servant about our private affairs! So we would turn sadly away; but, on approaching the gate at the end of the driveway, there would appear out of the shrubbery a sweet-faced lady, who would look kindly but wonderingly upon us. We would approach, throw ourselves at her feet, and tell her our sad story; how we had been disowned for a slight misdemeanor and cast out into the world, motherless and homeless! We would not reveal the name of our parents, but implore her to let it remain forever a mystery. The lady, having once had two little girls of her own who were kidnapped, would say: "I will take you to my heart, dear children; henceforth you shall be my own little girls; heaven has sent you to me in place of my lost ones."

We went on imagining that the lady's husband, who was a Baron, also became very fond of us, and engaged for us tutors, governesses and the finest teachers of music. We would surprise everybody with our wonderful talent and rapid progress. At last, after many years, being now grown up and having become great singers of world-wide repute, we would drive into Cheltenham one day, in the luxurious equipage of our adopted parents, stop at our old home and tell the footman to say that two young ladies would like to see Mrs. Barnett. We should be shown into the drawing-room, and in a few moments Mamma would enter, wondering who these two beautifully dressed young ladies could be? Then we would say: "Do you remember the two little girls who were disowned and cast out by you many years ago? We bring you news of them if you care to know that they still live!" At this Mamma's eyes would fill with tears, and in a choking voice she would sob out: "Oh, I was cruel and unjust; I see it all now! How can I ever forgive myself?" Then we would throw ourselves into her arms, crying: "As we forgive you, for in us behold your long-lost children!"

At this moment, we were startled in the midst of our imaginings by a piteous, wailing sound from without. It seemed to proceed from the alleyway back of our house. We started up in bed with, "What's that? Listen!" Again the wailing began. "It is — it must be the cry of an infant," exclaimed Rosie. "Oh, can it be some poor little helpless infant in the dark night? It seems we are not the only unhappy ones! Hear how it cries. What shall we — what *can* we do?" While we were trying to make up our minds, the door opened softly, and in came Jenny — our nurse — on tiptoe, for she expected to find us asleep.

"Oh, Jenny," we cried excitedly, "there's a poor little infant lying in the alleyway; it must have been abandoned. Can't we rescue it? Do help us!"

"Why, Miss Clara! It's cats! Don't you know caterwauling when you hear it?"

"Cats, — what do you mean?" cried Rosie, indignantly. "I never heard a cat mew like that. It's the cry of a poor little baby, I tell you!"

"Oh, go to sleep, and don't be silly!" exclaimed Jenny.

"We cannot go to sleep, we are hungry!" Rosie answered.

"Well, well, I'll go and bring you something to eat." And with that Jenny left us, returning in a little while with a bowl of bread and milk apiece. She told us that Papa and Mamma were at supper, that Mamma was feeling better and had sent her to see if we were asleep "as all good children ought to be at that time of night!" She stood by while we ate the whole of our bread and milk, then she tucked us up and bade us "Good night."

When we awoke next morning the sun had been up already a long time, and there was Mamma standing by my bedside. She did not look angry any more, but said gently, "If you will promise not to be naughty again, and never again to come home in such a state, I will forgive you this time, and you shall be my own little girls once more." With that she put her arms around us and kissed us.

And that was the end of our expedition to the Castle.

CHAPTER V

MY FIRST CONCERT — SHOCKING CONDUCT — "THE MOUNTAIN SYLPH" — A SCRATCH PERFORMANCE — A FISHING EXPEDITION — UNWELCOME AWAKENING — GOOD INTENTIONS — INJUSTICE — A HARD PUNISHMENT

MUSICAL entertainments in Cheltenham were few and far between. The élite, as represented by nabobs and their families, were too much taken up with testing the virtue of the waters of Pitville Spa as a cure for their sluggish livers to crave other pastimes. If I remember rightly there was no theater, and the semi-occasional dramatic performances, which mostly took the form of burlesques and vaudeville, took place in the "Assembly room," a hall in which from eight to nine hundred people could easily be bestowed. It was an accommodating little hall which opened its doors hospitably alike to stray concert companies touring the Provinces and to any other stray companies — operatic, dramatic or otherwise — who tarried there on the way to other and more receptive towns. When any concert company arrived, complimentary tickets were always sent to Papa by the manager. He, however, never attended any performances, neither were we permitted that dissipation save on one or two memorable occasions.

One occasion was when Mrs. Haynes, a pupil of my father, was to sing. This was my first concert and I must have been a very small child at the time, for I disgraced myself by an utter disregard of any observances required at a public performance. I expressed myself loudly in approval or the reverse whenever the impulse took me, and as a climax, after I had observed that a number of different singers and players came out to sing and play, it seemed to me that it was about time for my turn. So I jumped up on my seat and began to pipe my lay, confident that I had as much right to be heard and applauded as the rest of them. Every one in the audience turned in amazement, and amused chuckles were heard on all sides, which were most offensive to me as marring the seriousness of the occasion. Meanwhile Domenico, who sat next to me, was almost paralyzed with shame and horror. I was ignobly lifted down from my seat and forcibly dragged from the hall. I did not weep — I was too dazed! I could not make out what was the matter — why Dom was angry — why I had to be taken home before the concert was over.

My crime, however, was passed over lightly by Papa and Mamma. I was not punished, not even severely reprimanded, but it was explained to me that only the people on the platform were allowed to play and sing, and that the others seated in the hall were there only to listen and applaud. This was another mystery added to those others that had already troubled my childhood. Why should a little girl who could sing have to keep quiet when all those grown-ups were showing what they could do?

After that I was taken to no more entertainments for a long time. It was some years after, when Aunt Mary had come to live with us, that a performance of my father's Opera, "The Mountain Sylph," with distinguished artists was announced. Tickets were duly sent to us with the request that the composer would honour the performance with his presence and that of his family. Papa, as usual, could not be persuaded to go. He had acquired a morbid dislike to publicity, and Mamma also shrunk from what she felt might be a conspicuous situation. Domenico, Rosie and I, however, were allowed to go, with Aunt Mary as our escort. I shall never forget the glow of pride and feeling of importance that was ours as we were ushered to our seats in the front row and the signal given for the performance to commence with the assembling of the composer's family. There was in it a suggestion of royalty which greatly tickled our vanity, making us feel very grand and superior.

How the opera thrilled and excited us! How wonderful it all was. It was sung by really good artists, and to my eyes, Julia Harland, who played the part of the Sylph, was the most enchanting creature that imagination could picture! What matter if the orchestra did consist of only a pianoforte and a few stray instruments? It was for us, all the same, the most wonderful performance in the world!

One summer we went to Scarborough. Papa liked to try new watering places every year, and we had never been on the Yorkshire coast. We had been to Devonshire — to a lovely place called Ilfracombe — and to various places both in North and South Wales, but this year it was to be Scarborough. The house Papa had hired for the summer was on a high terrace overlooking the beach; a fine, broad stretch of sand with a huge pile of rugged rocks at one end of it. At high tide the waves came over these rocks, leaving big pools of water behind and depositing beautiful seaweeds and shells. It was my delight to climb over the rocks and crawl in and out of the little nooks and caves. There were places where you were quite hidden away, and no one could guess that there was a human being anywhere near. To this retreat I used to stray by myself at low tide whenever I had a chance, and because, when I was quite alone, I could imagine myself cast on a desert island and experiencing all kinds of wonderful adventures. I had given names to some of my favorite nooks; there was "The Cave of Dreams," "The Pool of Mystery," "The Siren's Pillow," "The Fairy's Well," — and others that I have forgotten, and you can well imagine what strange things might occur in such romantic surroundings!

One day I took it into my head to go fishing. It is true I had no fishing rod, line or hook, but what of that? I found a nice little straight stick on to which I tied a long piece of thread, and for a hook I used a bent pin. With this tackle I sallied forth to my favorite haunt among the rocks. The tide was very low and I knew that I could keep on fishing for a long time undisturbed. On my way to the beach I met Domenico. He had been fishing too, with a real pole and line.

"Where are you off to?" he cried out.

"I'm going fishing," I answered.

"What? with that thing? Where's your bait?"

"I don't care for any bait!" I replied, walking on haughtily, for I did not like his manner, — it hurt my feelings!

Once among the rocks, however, I soon forgot all about my scornful brother and his rude remarks. I went straight to "The Pool of Mystery," around the borders of which there were many holes and crevices lined with limpets, mussels and periwinkles. There, in a cosy nook, I settled myself, dangling my line with its baitless hook in the clear, transparent pool which held within it no sign of any living creature. But I do not mind letting you into the secret; it was not fish that I was after. The truth is that I expected something to happen! Of course I could not tell what, for there were so many different things that might happen; only, I was sure it would be something extraordinary, and that I should be called upon to perform some great deed. Perhaps rescue a beautiful Princess spellbound by a wicked magician. She might be hidden away in one of those limepit shells, — in a crevice or hole. Thus did I dream my time away, weaving a fairy tale about the spellbound Princess which seemed quite real to me, when all at once a shadow was cast on the pool.

At first it was only a small round spot, but presently it grew larger and larger. Now, thinks I, something is really going to happen! I heard a little shuffling sound, and then all was still. I held my breath and did not dare to stir, though my line was still dangling in the water, almost touching the shadow. Suddenly I was startled by a voice — not a sweet, gentle voice like that of a Fairy Princess — but a rough, common sort of voice.

"What yer fishin' for?" it said.

I looked around, and there, on one side of the pool, stood a poor, ragged boy who was a good deal bigger than I, with no shoes or stockings on his feet, and no hat on his head.

"What yer tryin' to ketch?" he repeated with a look half sheepish, half mocking.

Now I knew that this was not something that I was making up. It was a real boy, and I did not want him there. He was very disturbing! How could I get rid of him? I was almost ready to cry at being interrupted in my fairy dream, still I did not want to hurt the boy's feelings because he looked so poor and ragged; and besides, he wasn't doing any harm after all, and perhaps he did not know that he was intruding on private ground, — where my princesses, magicians and sirens lived. But I felt that my day was spoilt, and I made up my mind that the only thing for me to do was to get up and go home. So I pulled my line out of the water and began winding it round my rod.

Then the boy said, very sheepishly, "Yer didn't ketch nothin', did yer? What was yer tryin' to ketch?"

I pursed up my lips, but answered politely "Shrimps," at the same time starting to pass by him and go on my way.

"I'll show you where you can git plenty of 'em," he said, and he seemed so anxious to do me a service that I had not the heart to turn my back on him. I went passively along with him, down the rocks and on to the sands, where he stopped before a big pile of seaweed, which he lifted up, and out of which there hopped hundreds and hundreds of little live things. He stooped down and caught one little wiggling creature which he handed to me.

"Thur's a shrimp fur yer!" he said.

I took it reluctantly and held the poor wiggling thing between my finger and thumb, awaiting the first opportunity to throw it away when he was not looking, for of course I did not want it! All I wanted was to get rid of the lad and go home, for I had a guilty feeling that Papa would be angry if he saw me talking with that kind of a boy. What was I to do? I couldn't tell him to go away, because that would be unkind, but as he made no attempt to move, I was at my wits' end how to get away from him. At last I had a bright idea; I remembered that I had a penny in my pocket; I would pay him for his trouble and dismiss him in a business-like way. So I fumbled for the penny and gave it to him, saying, "Thank you for the shrimp, and good afternoon."

The boy looked in a dazed way at the penny, then at me, and again at the penny, as though he could hardly believe his eyes. Meanwhile I started hurriedly on my way. In another minute I heard the flap, flap of bare feet on the wet sand and behold, to my despair, there was the boy again following me. He had just caught up and now was again walking beside me. He still held the penny in his hand and kept looking at it, and then at me, and again at the penny, as if he had never seen one before. I was now right in front of the terrace where we lived, and I could see the window of our sitting room quite plainly. A sudden panic seized me, and without thinking any more about politeness, or the boy's feelings, I exclaimed nervously, "I must hurry home," and with that I took to my heels in a most undignified manner, and scooted up the lane leading from the beach.

When I entered our sitting room, I was all out of breath and burning hot. Papa was there, standing near the window. He turned, came toward me frowning, and exclaimed, "How dare you walk on the beach, Miss, with that low-life boy? Have I not warned you again and again not to associate with people of that sort?"

"I was not 'associating,'" I began tearfully to explain, but Papa would not let me speak. "I am very angry with you, Miss," he continued. "I see you are not to be trusted; I am ashamed of you! You will henceforth go out no more alone; do you hear? I intend to be obeyed!"

Oh, what a sinking I felt at my heart! Never to go any more to "The Pool of Mystery." What a terrible punishment! What had I done to deserve it? I could not help it if the boy followed me. I tried to get rid of him, and I tried to behave as a young lady should do. I felt that a great injustice had been done me, and bitterly did I weep. Why, oh, why, did all my pleasures seem to end in bitterness? — My one hope was in Mamma. If I could get her to listen to the truth about the boy, perhaps she would tell Papa, and he would let me go to my beloved pool again.

CHAPTER VI

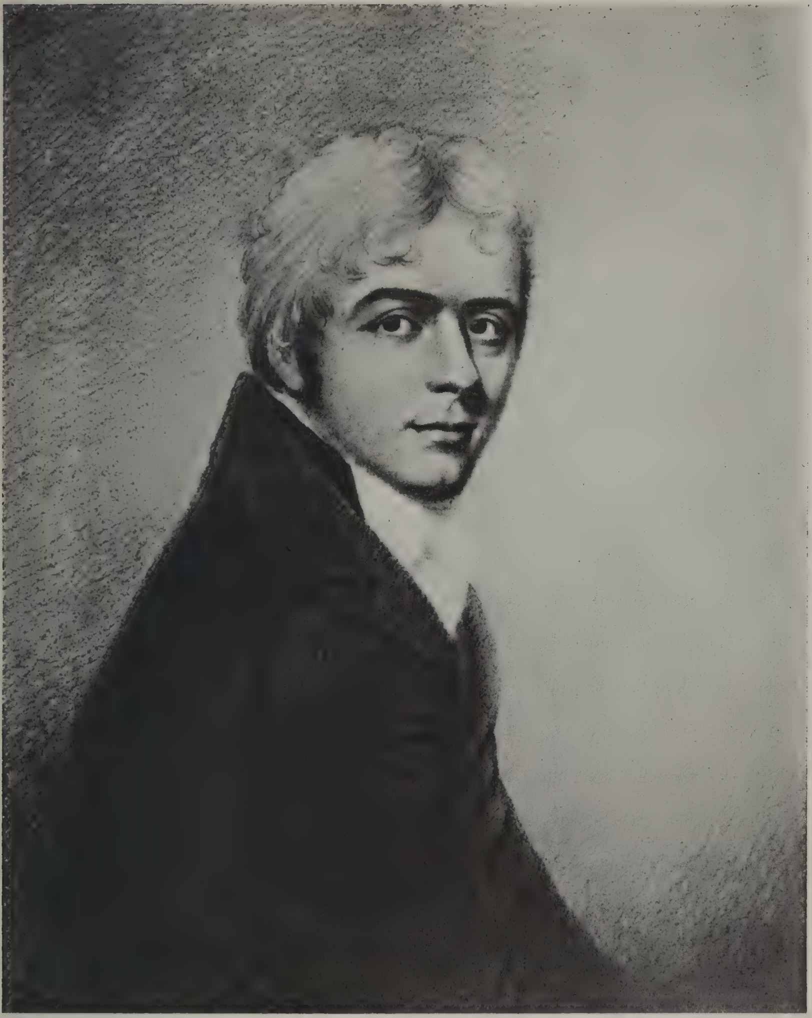
PROJECTED TRIP TO LONDON — STORIES OF ROBERT LINDLEY AND FRANZ LISZT — LONDON — THE GREAT EXHIBITION OF 1851 — A MEMORABLE MEETING — GRANDFATHER LINDLEY — OUR UNCLE AND COUSINS — BUCKSTONE, THE COMEDIAN — A PANTOMIME AT COVENT GARDEN

AT one period of our lives in Cheltenham we observed that on Sundays, which Papa always spent at home, he and Mamma were hatching up some plot together. We were terribly curious to know what it was all about, but we could tell that they did not want us to know, for they spoke in a low tone, and every now and again looked furtively around to see if we were listening. At last the truth came out; we were all of us to go up to London for a week, to see the great Exhibition. Some old friends of Papa, named Spinney, who lived in Brompton, had invited some of us children, while Papa and Mamma and the rest were to stay with Uncle Joseph, Papa's brother, and we were to make the acquaintance of our cousins for the first time, a wonderful anticipation for us, who had never foregathered with children of our own age. There were six of them, two boys and four little girls, and we were eager to make friends with them, for we were by nature both companionable and affectionate. Such a great event as this we had never even dreamed of, and what with the hurry and bustle of being made ready to go, and the anticipation of all the wonderful things we were to see and to do, we were almost beside ourselves with excitement. But the most thrilling part of it all was that we were actually going to see Grandpapa — Mamma's own father, Robert Lindley — the greatest violoncello player in the world — he who was the bosom friend of Kings and Princes, who was as much at home at Court as in his own home.

Mamma had from time to time proudly told us many stories about him: for instance, how he played duets with the Regent, afterward George IV, and how George used to put his arms around him and call him "Robert, my boy!" She entertained us with no end of anecdotes about the way different people showed their respect and admiration for him. Either George IV or William III, I do not remember which, wanted to knight him, but Grandpapa did not see the good of it, as being knighted could not make him either a finer player or a better man. Besides, he thought it would be a nuisance to have to go to Court in full Court-dress and wear a sword. So he would have none of it, for he was at heart a modest, simple gentleman who shunned notoriety.

Of course, we children were secretly rather sorry that Grandpapa would not accept the honour of being "Sir Robert Lindley," although Mamma said how fine it was of him to decline an honour which any one else in his place would have jumped at, and she impressed on our minds how rare a thing it was to find anybody so wrapped up in his Art as to have no thought of worldly ambition. So, as you can well imagine, our feeling for our Grandpapa Lindley was something little short of hero worship!

Mamma used to tell us how once, when he was jour-



ROBERT LINDLEY, (1776-1855), GRANDFATHER OF THE AUTHOR
From an old portrait

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neying to Nottingham to play at a concert, the stagecoach upset, and all the passengers were thrown out on the road. Some were screaming, some fainting with fright, others moaning with pain, for there were sprained wrists and ankles and broken bones too; but Grandpapa was seen quietly seated on a bank, his 'cello between his knees, playing a cantilena, — his only care being to find out whether his beloved instrument had sustained any injury in the general shake-up. The picture of Grandpapa sitting there, placid and unconcerned, listening smilingly to the tone of his 'cello in the midst of the hubbub and confusion of the accident, so fascinated us that we never tired asking Mamma to tell us again about "Grandpapa and the stagecoach." She used mostly to humour us if the moment were not too badly chosen. My private opinion was that she liked to recall these things almost as much as we loved to hear them repeated.

She used also to tell us how Grandpapa played for fifty-two years at the same desk at the Opera, the Philharmonic, the Festivals, etc., with Domenico Dragonetti, the greatest double-bass player the world had ever known, and she used to keep us amused with many stories of Dragonetti's eccentricities. My brother, named for him, Domenico Dragonetti, was his godson, while Rosamond's second name was Liszt, after Franz Liszt, who was her godfather. A beautiful silver goblet exquisitely inscribed, Liszt's gift to her at her baptism, was greatly prized in our family. We children regarded the goblet with a kind of awe, for to us Liszt stood as a wonderful but remote personage — a sort of musical demigod — unapproachable as the sun.

Liszt has always been associated in my mind with a story that Papa once told us about a concert of Liszt's which he attended. "At the commencement of a sonata he was disturbed by an audibly whispered conversation between two ladies in the audience. Whereupon Liszt suddenly stopped playing, and rising abruptly from the piano, came deliberately forward to the front of the platform. Adjusting his monocle and fixing his gaze on the delinquents, he said in the suavest tones, "Pray do not let me disturb your conversation by my playing." There was a dead silence — during which the unfortunate ladies shrivelled and would gladly have hidden under their seats, for all eyes were turned in their direction — after which Liszt calmly resumed his seat at the piano. We revelled in this story, picturing Liszt in all his monocled majesty. But alas! We had but little hope of ever seeing him. He seemed to exist in another world than ours, as much so as did Dragonetti who had died years ago. But there was Grandpapa Lindley at least. He not only lived, but we were actually to behold him with our own eyes! And we dreamed of it and talked about it until the event took on magnified proportions.

When at last the time came, we trembled with awe; how should we approach this great presence? What should we say to him? Something akin to an awful dread seized upon us. I think that a sudden panic might even have impelled us to run away at the last moment had not Mamma held us by the hand and led us into the library where Grandpapa was sitting in an armchair near the fireplace. He turned toward us as we entered, and from the first moment that we beheld that dear, benign countenance we felt no more fear. He drew us to him with a smile so kindly that in a few moments we felt quite at home with him, and without knowing exactly how it came about, Rosie and I were soon perched one on each knee, and he was stroking our heads with his long white fingers and calling us his "two little wives." This was the climax; after that what could happen?

The impression that remains to me now of Grandpapa was of a very tall and finely proportioned man with white hair, a clean-shaven face, an expression almost childlike in its simplicity and a smile as sweet as love itself. At that time he had passed his eightieth year, but one could detect no signs of infirmity except a slight stoop. All thoughts of his celebrity, of his achievements, of the honours bestowed by royalty were banished from our mind; there he sat, nothing more nor less than a dear, lovable old gentleman. Dignified? Yes, but with the gentle dignity of simplicity.

Our stay in London, to which we had looked forward with such wild anticipations of delight as something which would realize for us all the wonders of the unknown, has remained scarcely more than a blur in my memory, with the exception of our visit to Grandpapa Lindley. It was all like a dream which one quickly forgets, though so real to us at the time of the dreaming. I was too little to comprehend the bigness of a great city or the tumultuous activities of London life. It only confused and bewildered me. Like unto a sparrow taking only a little sip out of the river Thames — all that it could drink of its floods — I could only take in a tiny speck at a time of London's vastness. Moreover, I had, in some strange way, lost my identity. I was no longer the little girl that I was in the habit of talking to inside myself. Where was I? I had lost my anchorage. What was I? Nothing more than a winged seed of thistledown, carried hither and yon in the morning air.

I went with the rest of us to spend the day with Papa's brother, Uncle Joseph, and family at Kentish Town, a suburb of London. Our six cousins were too many strangers at one time to make a distinct impression on a small child unused to playmates outside of her own family.

Of the Great Exhibition of 1851, I can just recall a huge palace of glass planted in Hyde Park near the Serpentine, with many tinted parterres of geraniums on the outside. Of the inside of the building I have no recollection whatever, save that it was there I tasted for the first time strawberry ice-cream. It was served in a tall glass, like our sherry glasses at home, and built up like a pyramid on top. I had heard of "Ambrosia," and I felt sure that must be it!

Papa and Mamma's time was much taken up by old friends who were eager to entertain them, so we children were left a good deal to ourselves in the nursery of the Spinneys, whose two little children were not "our sort." But we were taken to the house of the then celebrated comedian Buckstone (who enjoyed much the same kind of reputation as did later our dear and much regretted William Warren in Boston). Buckstone was my godfather, and Kathleen FitzWilliam of his company was my godmother. I have still a faint recollection of her comely person and cheery address. As an infant I had been fed with pap from a handsome silver spoon, and later with a fork, — her baptismal gifts to me. These are still in use in our household, for other purposes than pap and mashed potatoes, together with a handsome silver mug, with carved figures thereon representing the four seasons, the gift of my godfather Buckstone. Rosie and I had occasional discussions as to which of us had reason to feel most proud of our respective godfathers. It generally ended in my mug taking a back shelf.

I can recall the humorous face of Buckstone, which seemed as if his funny thought had worn deep ruts in his cheeks and twisted his mouth into a queer shape.

My unruly mop of hair was, for convenience sake, gathered into a mohair net of which I was very proud, and I recall that my godfather patted my head proudly and called me "little redhead." That is all I remember of him.

Of all the entertainments at the different theatres, for which Papa received complimentary boxes from the managers, we were taken to Covent Garden to see a very gorgeous pantomime called "King Charming." That the ballet girls were all fairies or angels I was sure, because otherwise how could they appear at one moment in white skirts, at another in pink, green, blue, or gold; and how could they flit about as they did unless they had wings? This illusion for me was perfect, as I had not the least idea what the pantomime was all about.

Between the acts, a knock came at the door of our box, and there entered a very dignified-looking waiter with a tray of ices, cakes, jellies and negus, with the compliments of the manager, who soon followed the tray in person. But alas, the excitement of my first introduction to a theatre had so acted on my intensely sensitive nature as to completely upset me, and I was doomed to contemplate all these luxuries without being able to touch one of them, while Dom and Rosie ate their fill of all those good things. It is a humiliating reflection on my state of mind at that period that any lasting impressions of London received by me were chiefly gastronomic!

When we returned home after our week in London it was without regret. Even the mild excitements to which I had been subjected had been almost too much for me, and I was glad of the quiet of Cheltenham once more. There, in the old haunts, I regained my lost identity, and to me that was an untold comfort!

CHAPTER VII

WHITE LIES — OPPORTUNE REFLECTIONS — MY FATHER IN A RUT — HIS CONTEMPT FOR "POTBOILERS" — "PRIME DONNE IN ERBA" — RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

MY propensity for inventing sensational stories and telling them as facts was the source of much perplexity to my mother. I was continually "supposing" things that might happen, and I would become so possessed by these vivid imaginings that I failed to realize that they had only happened in my own brain and not elsewhere.

I was absolutely innocent of any deceit, for inherently I was truthful. It never even occurred to me to deny anything I had done in order to avoid punishment. But my fatal imagination was constantly getting me into trouble. Every object that came my way suggested something else, mostly something unusual and unsuspected. The vagaries of my mind took all sorts of whimsical and fantastic shapes. For instance, I remember distinctly conceiving the idea one day that Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, eager to confer some honour on Papa, would come to Cheltenham and bear him off to Windsor Palace, where he would be fêted and acclaimed by all the Court. I pictured the Royal Pair driving up to our door in a magnificent equipage with four spirited horses, an imposing driver, and a footman in resplendent livery and powdered wig standing with arms folded in the rear of the coach. I saw him descend, bend low before the door while receiving orders from the Queen, ascend our steps, seize the knocker and give a rapid succession of knocks, followed by a lusty peal of the bell.[1]

I then began picturing all the wonderful things that would happen for the glorification of the entire Barnett family, till at last the "coach and four" became real to me; it was actually at the door. I rushed, breathless with excitement, to look for Mamma. I found her in the housekeeper's room, so-called, preparing red currants for jelly. Her fingers were stained with the fruit, she wore a large apron, and was far from presentable. She looked up as I bounced into the room and observing my flushed face and excited manner, said in an anxious tone, "What is the matter?"

"Oh, Mamma," I gasped, "there was a double knock at the door and a ringing of the bell, and there is a grand carriage and four in waiting," at this beginning to describe minutely the Royal equipage.

Mamma, in a flurry, glanced at her hands, hopelessly stained with currant juice, gave sundry tugs at her apron, exclaiming nervously, "How can I see any one now in this plight? It is, of course, your father that they want to see. You must tell them he is not at home." At the same time she was mechanically ascending the back stairs, I following rather sheepishly at her heels. From the dining-room window she had a full view of the street.

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[1] This was the period of iron and brass knockers, the street door of every house being furnished with one. Even these knockers were made to register "class distinctions." For instance, there was one knock for those who came on business of an humble nature, two for the postman, three or four for professional visitors, while for social calls from the upper classes from five to eight knocks were customary; this was called by the name of "a double knock" and was often followed by a lusty peal of the door-bell, which generally indicated that there was a carriage and pair at the door.

"I see no carriage," she cried, looking at me bewildered. I had by now come out of my imaginary excitement.

"It was only my fun, — I just said it for fun!" I said uneasily, averting my eyes from her reproachful gaze.

"You naughty girl! What do you mean by frightening me so? You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

I hung my head in silence, for indeed I had no excuse to make. I had no idea why I had played this silly trick.

The next day she put into my hands a book. "Read this," she said gravely. "It will teach you a lesson that you need!" It was one of Mrs. Opey's tales, entitled "White Lies." In it a little girl who tells them comes to a bad end. I opened the book with docility and read the first sentence, which was, "Shut the door, Agatha — But Agatha stirred not"; and I remember to this day my silent protest that a story beginning with an act of disobedience should be called "White Lies." Even then I must have dimly felt that it was a false note!

Let me add here a word of encouragement to parents who may happen to have a child with an inordinate propensity for romancing. They need feel no perplexity as to how to deal with it, for it will in the long run right itself.

The explanation is that a child with a very active brain, not provided with enough facts to keep it employed, creates instinctively its own fictions to feed that natural activity, and as it is not able to clearly distinguish between what takes place subjectively and what is objective, it is apt to mistake these self-created fictions for actual facts. It is not long before the brain, replete with facts, ceases to hunger after other mental pabulum. I hold it, therefore, to be a mistake to check the imaginative faculty in children which in after life, if kept under control, may prove to be a valuable possession.

I can see now how different our childhood was from that of other young people. As we received our general education, chiefly private, from tutors and governesses until I was ten years old and Rosie nearly thirteen, we made no friends of our own age, and any chance playmates who came our way were not encouraged; they were only time-wasters, we were told, and would hinder our practise. Papa was ambitious; he expected great things from us. That we were to become musical celebrities was a foregone conclusion which we accepted as something we owed to our forbears. We were practically put under bonds to take ourselves seriously and thoroughly imbued with the idea that it would be criminal for us not to be more clever and more diligent than any others of our own age.

My father evidently did not consider what the effect of his high standard might be on sensitive and high-strung children. As it was, much of our spontaneous joy in practising and natural eagerness to improve were swallowed up in fear of failure and in distrust of ourselves. My brother, Domenico, was the chief sufferer. He grew to be so nervous when he played to Papa that he nearly always stumbled and discredited himself. Rosie and I had more confidence and did not lay ourselves open to censure quite as often as he did.

There was no one in Cheltenham whom my father considered worthy to teach us music, so all our early training was received from my mother, with the addition of an occasional overhauling from Papa, who set us our tasks. He never gave us anything to play but classical music, — sonatas by Haydn and Mozart; Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words" was the most modern music we ever became acquainted with.

When we were sufficiently advanced to play Beethoven's Sonatas, Papa himself undertook to give us lessons regularly twice a week. When he was in Germany in his youth, Papa was a pupil of Ferdinand Ries, who in his turn was a pupil of Beethoven. Thus Papa's interpretation of the Sonatas came to us from the original source.

As these lessons were given in the evening after he had been teaching singing all day, it is not to be wondered at that he was irritable and impatient if we stumbled. So great, however, was our admiration — our reverence — for his genius that we never for a moment questioned his justice. We always accepted the fact that we were to blame. But a word of praise was indeed a joy supreme. Even a covert smile of gratification made us happy. The thought that he was sacrificing his brilliant public career in London for our sakes, in order to afford us a superior education — a fact of which Mamma constantly reminded us — naturally heightened our reverence for him and spurred us on to almost supernatural effort, but at the same time weighted us with an overwhelming sense of obligation. Thus were we deprived of that light-heartedness and childlike irresponsibility which belonged so legitimately to our tender age.

My father spared nothing in giving us opportunities to develop our faculties in all directions. We were sent to the riding school, where I performed feats of galloping on a spirited white pony; to dancing school, where we cut strange capers. We also had private lessons in drawing. Dom and Rosie showed quite a talent for drawing and Mrs. Alden, our teacher, was proud of them; but I was a hopeless dunce at it, for it seemed quite impossible for me to draw a straight line. My teacher kept me trying until her patience was exhausted, and then she came to the conclusion she must tell Papa it was of no use for me to take any more lessons. It happened, however, that on the day when she intended to break the news to him, I saw in her portfolio a drawing of an "Ancient house" which took my fancy. I begged her to let me copy it and make a picture like the ones Rosie and Dom were making, instead of ugly straight lines. She fairly gasped at my effrontery, but she let me have the sketch just to see what would happen. I worked at it with a will for an hour, and lo, I produced quite a decent little picture of the "Ancient house," — the shading being particularly good, as she said. So she changed her mind about giving me up, and I continued to make humble little pictures *without* straight lines. I had no real taste for drawing, however, and never cared to follow it up as did both Rosie and Dom, who developed real talent for painting thereafter. After all, outside of music I was but a poor student. I never could do sums; figures meant nothing to me. I never could spell English, for my musical ear always led me astray. I never could draw a map of any country; and I never could learn to sew. Rosie excelled in all these things. How I respected her!

My father, from time to time, received letters from managers asking if some arrangement could be made with him to bring out his unpublished opera, "Kathleen." He was apt to read such letters to Mamma in our presence at the breakfast table, which called forth the eager cry from us in chorus, "Oh, Papa, I hope you will! Do say yes, this time!" But no, he never did say "Yes." There was always some excuse. Either he thought the prima donna of the company not suited to the rôle, or the music too high or too low for the tenor, or else the orchestration would need reinforcing to meet the modern requirements. His real but secret reasons were partly that he was too hard worked to set about making any alterations, and partly a kind of dread, which had gradually crept upon him, of again entering public life and running the gamut of public opinion. The truth is, he was in a rut and could not get out of it! His almost morbid dread of publicity was what his restricted life in Cheltenham had wrought in him. From the time he took up his abode there his one idea had been to support and educate his family, and it took all his time and all his energy to earn money enough to do that. He composed no new works of any importance after leaving London. Songs, yes. Hundreds of them. Many of them, though not quite all, only "potboilers" written to order for various publishers, who not infrequently furnished him with a text suited to the taste of the average school girl or amateur of the day. Nothing ever seemed to displease Papa more than to find Rosie or me poring over a volume of these "potboilers," which we, in our loyalty, swallowed whole. I remember well how darkly he frowned on us one day when he discovered us on the window seat of his library, — our little feet drawn up under us and a huge volume of his songs balanced between our two laps. We had just come upon a song which went to our hearts, and we were singing it to ourselves in subdued tones, with intense feeling. The text began "Be gentle to the youthful, for they have enough to bear."

Papa burst out with, "Don't sing that rubbish, for heaven's sake!"

"Oh, but it's so true!" we answered tearfully, inwardly resolved to go back to it when his back was turned.

We had already begun to have occasional singing lessons, much to our delight. Mamma taught us from Papa's "Singing-book," — a very exhaustive treatise which went into the minutest particulars respecting style and ornamentation, and which contained a wealth of melodious exercises embodying the different types of ornamentation. We practised these exercises so diligently, for the mere love of it, that our little childish voices had already acquired a flexibility that was something unusual. When Papa's attention was drawn to this — our unexpected attainment — he began to take an interest in teaching us himself. The very first song he gave me was, I remember, "Das Erste Veilchen" by Mendelssohn, which I sang in German of a kind. Afterwards he taught us principally Italian songs and duets. For these last he composed elaborate two-part cadenzas which were sometimes almost as long as the body of the piece itself. There was one duet in particular, by "Donizetti," for which he wrote a most elaborate and intricate one. We practised it together with the greatest relish, aiming at the most faultless intonation and perfect blending of voices, and oh, how elated we were at detecting the twinkle of pleasure in Papa's eyes when we sang it to him.

One Sunday afternoon, an old pupil of his from Malvern, then a concert singer, came to pay him a visit, and Rosie and I were called in for inspection. "I want you to sing, 'Dolce dell' Anima' to Mrs. Haynes," he said.

Nothing loath, we stood up in the middle of the room and piped out our duet with a great deal of aplomb. I can recall even to-day our clear-cut phrasing and musical accentuation which was emphasized by the contrasted effect of our childish voices.

Mrs. Haynes sat gazing at us with eyes wide open and parted lips, — a covert expression of amused astonishment on her face, which was flattering to our feelings, till we came to the grand cadenza. Then she suddenly burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. She mopped her eyes with her handkerchief and gasped out, between fresh peals of laughter, "Oh, Oh! It is too much, too much!"

Papa did not seem to mind her laughing, but we felt mortally offended and hurt to the core. That any one should find food for laughter in an artistic performance which to us was such a serious matter was simply incomprehensible and something never to be forgotten or forgiven! If we could only have guessed how funny it was to see two little mites standing up there and mastering the intricacies of a very grown-up and elaborate cadenza with all the airs and assurance of great prime donne, we might perhaps have laughed too! As it was, we refused to have any further intercourse with this irrelevant person and walked from the room in dignified and reproachful silence to vent our injured feelings in secret tears.

CHAPTER VIII

VARIOUS ABODES — THEIR ASSOCIATIONS — DEATH OF TURP — A FUNERAL — AUNT MARY — FEVER-STRICKEN "MONSON VILLA" — THE "LUCKY CORNER" — STAGE-STRUCK

THE various houses into which we moved, generally at the expiration of a three years' lease, are landmarks of the different phases of life and memorable events of my childhood. Thus, Clifton House is associated with learning to read and write — painful pothooks and many other of the trials of childhood — the birth of a little brother named Ernest — my first music lesson — my first attempt at composition — some other joys and many tender memories.

It was there I acquired the experience that bottles, even thick black ones, would break if knocked hard together. How well I remember the occasion. A case of "Guiness' Stout" had been delivered (Mamma having persuaded Papa that he should take a glass daily to keep up his strength) and Rosie and I volunteered to carry the bottles into Papa's study to be stowed in his private closet. We each took two bottles at a time, I, for my part, feeling proud at the confidence placed in me. While standing in the doorway waiting to hand in my two bottles it occurred to me to exercise with them as Papa was in the habit of doing with dumb-bells every morning. So I knocked their stumpy bodies together, first in front and then behind with a lusty swing. A crash — a black stream — two severed necks in my hands, — the rest remains a blank!

At Sussex House, our next abode, took place the death and imposing funeral of our faithful dog, Turp. This was the first real grief that came into our lives. Although Turp had been with us for only a few years, he seemed to us a lifelong companion, besides being our only playmate. But we did not know at first how much we should miss him, because we had so much that was important to occupy us. There was the grave-digging, the funeral and the burial, — all of which had to be promptly attended to. We were determined that he should have a dignified funeral, that a proper tribute should be paid to his memory, and we were willing to work hard for it.

We dug a large grave for him at the further end of the garden, near the wall, and when that was done we laid him on a bier, which consisted of the kennel door, which Domenico took off its hinges. We gathered flowers and strewed them over the bier, laying some sprays of white jasmine on his breast as an emblem of purity and sweetness. Domenico and James, the boy who weeded the garden, were pall bearers; while Rosie and I, brother Julius, and Jenny the nursemaid, with the baby, Ernest, in her arms, followed in procession. We laid Turp tenderly in his grave. Dom read the funeral service, ending up with "Ashes to ashes and dust to dust," after which James and Dom shovelled the earth over him while we, the procession, moved slowly away with bent heads and with handkerchiefs to our eyes, all but baby Ernest, who did not like the proceedings and yelled lustily.

After this we were deeply engrossed in composing a suitable epitaph to be cut into a piece of deal board, the letters blackened with ink to make them stand out plainly. Many were the attempts we made and rejected as inadequate, but at last we decided on the following:

Here lies —
Our beloved dog and dear companion.
His name was Turp, but he was free from Turpitude.
He died mourned by all who knew him.
Rest in Peace,
Thou Faithful Friend.

It was from Sussex House that we went to the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London and saw our Grandfather, Robert Lindley, in the flesh, and here the news of his death reached us one sad morning, on which Mamma hurried off to London to assist in the last rites.

On her return we were put into black frocks, after which everything went on as before except for the arrival of Aunt Mary, Mamma's eldest sister, who was henceforth to make her home with us. She had remained unmarried and had never even had her romance. Yet she was by no means ill-favoured. Tall and stately and with regular features, she would not have been neglected by the other sex had she led a less restricted life. Our home was to her a grateful place of refuge, and she was devoted to us children.

It was at Sussex House that our dear little pet brother, Ernest, was stricken with typhoid fever. The poignancy of our grief at his loss was deflected by our immediate alarm on account of Domenico, who had taken the disease in so serious a form that we came very near to losing him too. Then, after many weeks of anxiety, it became evident that I was to be the next victim of the dread disease. My parents, in desperate alarm at this third case in our family and suspecting that there might be something wrong with the house, moved precipitately into a furnished lodging, whither I was transported, wrapped in blankets. From that moment all was a blank for me, except for some bad dreams of delirium. My case, however, proved to be a light one, and in a month I was out and about again. The outbreak of typhoid was attributed to exhalations from the grave of our lamented dog; Domenico, for some unaccountable reason, having been seized with the impulse to exhume the body. Scientists of to-day would probably scoff at such a theory!

As our parents could not be induced to return to Sussex House after so disastrous an experience, they sought a new place of residence and found it in a wonderful old house a little removed from town, though not enough to be termed suburban. "Monson Villa," as it was named, was a large, gray-stone house standing alone in a splendid old garden covering over two acres of ground. In it all the trees and shrubs were of time-honoured growth. There were hardy rosebushes of a variety unknown to-day — possibly the result of pollen carried by different generations of bees. In the centre of a broad expanse of lawn, at the back of the house, stood a superb sycamore tree, the trunk of which was so large in circumference that it took our entire family with joined hands and outstretched arms to span it.

At the further end of the flower garden was a gate leading into a large vegetable garden and orchard, where flourished fine old fruit trees of many sorts. For each variety of apples, pears, or plums we invented names descriptive of the impression they produced on our palate, scorning all familiar horticultural terms. Surreptitious raids on these trees were made by us long before harvest time, Dom being head thief, as he was the best climber, we smaller fry having to content ourselves with windfalls when Dom was not generously disposed. These raids of Dom's were answerable for many a mysterious stomach-ache both distressing and perplexing to our poor little mother, who certainly had her hands full with four reckless children to care for, while there was nearly always another baby on the road.

Both gardens were enclosed by a high brick wall. On one side the wall abutted on an alley which was the scene of many a youthful delinquent's escape from the vigilant policeman. In one corner of the garden we used to find at odd times a strange medley of articles, such as penknives, scissors, padlocks, balls, kites, tops, marbles, coins, etc. We called it "The Lucky Corner." It was visited regularly by some one of us morning and evening in search of treasure. It never occurred to us to investigate the source from which our loot was derived. We greatly preferred it to be enveloped in mystery. It was just "The Lucky Corner"; what more did we care to know? One evening, however, while we were playing in the garden, we heard in the alley, near the "Lucky Corner," a scuffling of feet and suddenly — plump over the wall into our garden — was projected a brass door knocker and some other things. On putting two and two together, we came to the conclusion that when a thief was chased by a policeman in our neighbourhood that particular corner happened to provide a convenient place to rid himself of the booty to avoid being caught *flagrante delicto*. The mystery then was solved! It was stolen goods that we had been gloating over. "The Lucky Corner" had forever lost its charm!

They say that all children are liable to be "stage-struck" at some period of their lives. We were no exception to that rule. Although we knew nothing about theatres and had never seen a drama of any kind, all three of us, but particularly Rosie and I, had a strong dramatic instinct. Our fine old garden, with its arbors and sheltered corners, provided natural scenic effects and settings of which we were keen to avail ourselves. Foremost among our permanent stage properties was the trunk of the huge sycamore, which had been struck by lightning during the first year of our abode at Monson Villa. Papa had it cut down to about the height of a table and the generous surface beautifully smoothed off. This served us in a variety of ways, — as a platform, a pulpit, a shop counter, or a fortress. We were the blissful owners of eight splendid white rabbits, and these also served our purpose in various ways, sometimes to represent fiery steeds to promote hair-breadth escapes from villany or from justice, as our fancy might dictate. We had improvised harnesses for them adapted to different situations.

In one of our dramas (the plot being sketched out by common accord, though the lines were always extemporary), we had planned for the elopement of a pair of lovers, who fled from the tyrannical sway of sordid parents who were forcing the heroine to marry a rich villain. The coach and six in which our lovers were to escape consisted in a little home-made cart to which we harnessed six of our rabbits. The reins were to be tied to a tree till the time came for the start. As we had no dolls at our disposal we discussed the propriety of borrowing the baby — a tiny, pink, crumpled entity — to impersonate the bride, but in order to make sure that the rampageous rabbits in their flight would not upset the baby, we deemed it prudent to rehearse the elopement with a faggot of wood in the cart.

Our grand rehearsal was in progress and we were hot in the excitement of driving our coach and six fiery steeds round the garden, when suddenly there appeared on the scene Doctor Carey, who was attending Mamma, accompanied by Papa. They stood for a few moments sternly regarding our proceedings, and then the doctor let out a reproachful volley about cruelty to animals. He told us we were putting a strain on the hearts of these domesticated creatures by driving them at such a pace which might cause them to drop dead in their tracks at any moment. We listened to his lecture in deep contrition. The rabbits were promptly unharnessed and returned to their cages by four very crestfallen young people, and that particular drama was never performed! Julius, by the way, was never cast for any part in our plays; we used him as a sort of general utility man and stage supernumerary.

The extemporaneous lines in our plays were uniformly grandiloquent in style, often rising to the dignity of verse. For instance, in one play where Rosie and I impersonated lifelong friends who had been captured by the enemy and were about to be ruthlessly torn asunder, while maintaining a defiant attitude in the face of our captors, with arms intertwined, we declaimed in unison:

"You can't undo us if you try,
We're bound much stronger than a hook and eye."

And once, when Dom had had enough of one of our dramatic effusions, and saw no prospect of its drawing to a speedy close, he came forward on the scene in tragic mood, declaiming,

"Oh, daughter, most unnatural daughter,
Behold thy father's slaughter!"

whereupon he stabbed himself with a paper-knife and fell expiring on the grass. After which, of course, he was free to quit the scene and run off to play cricket in an adjoining field with some of his chums.

How odd it seems that I should retain such a vivid recollection of these silly things and this doggerel, when so many things of real interest have probably passed into oblivion!

CHAPTER IX

JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT — INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS — TWO PRECOCIOUS YOUTHS — HEINRICH WERNER AND JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH MILLS — HUMBLED TO THE DUST — OLD ENGLISH CUSTOMS — INTRODUCTION OF GAS — BROTHER JULIUS

IT was at Monson Villa that our cousin, John Francis, son of my father's brother Joseph, came to pay us a visit. Up to that time we had only admired him at a distance. Uncle Joseph, who from time to time used to come up from London on a flying visit, never seemed to tire of telling us of John's great achievements. Papa used to listen with a grim interest to his brother's panegyrics. He could give no such glowing account of his own children.

After Uncle Joseph's visits we always felt very small and insignificant, for we knew that Papa was comparing Johnny's brilliant talent with our modest attainments without taking into consideration the superior advantages that were his in London — of being in the midst of artists and art lovers, with every opportunity of hearing good music — while we were isolated in an inartistic, provincial town where there was nothing to stimulate us, no one to hear or to encourage us. My mother once remarked to Papa in my hearing after Uncle's departure, "Your brother Joseph's geese are all swans, while your swans are all geese!"

There was nothing mean about us, so we looked forward to our cousin's advent with great joy, somewhat intermixed, however, with awe. "Would he condescend to foregather with us? Would he care to join in any of our pursuits? We did not dare to hope that he would care to hear us play, seeing that he could play so much better himself; of course it would only bore him. These were some of our reflections. As it turned out, however, we got along very well together. He enjoyed our willing homage and condescended to show us how clever he was apart from piano playing.

At the time he was deep in the reading of Joyce's book of Physics; he had even tried some experiments with a Leyden jar. This was altogether too much for us. We felt that we really must do something to emulate his example. But as "Joyce's Physics" was too profound a book for us small fry, we managed to get hold of a more simple exposition of things scientific in a little book entitled "Harry and Lucy," in which were revealed in the form of a dialogue between two young people and an instructor many wonderful things worth knowing in the realm of physics. We became vastly interested in its teachings and were eager to inform the other members of our household, particularly the gardener, of its revelations.

To be perfectly honest, we were not as profoundly impressed with our cousin's playing as we expected to be. But what did appeal to our admiration was his unswerving assurance, his utter freedom from the nervousness which so handicapped Domenico in particular. Johnny never stumbled as Dom did; he always played smoothly along as though nothing could upset him. This was his supreme point of distinction in our eyes. As he was continually held up to us as an example by Papa, I do think it was to our merit we never felt a speck of jealousy or resentment, but continued to accord him our frank admiration for his avowed superiority.

Shortly after Johnny's advent had caused us to fall to our lowest estate both in our father's and our own estimation, there came one day another proud father with his *Wunderkind* named Heinrich Werner. He wanted Papa to hear his child-wonder play, and we were invited to be present at his performance. As we listened we knew only too well that it portended further mortification for us, — more unfavorable comparisons! So we prepared to bow our heads to the inevitable. But in spite of these disturbing incidents we plodded along day by day, practising our Beethoven Sonatas faithfully by ourselves, — Mamma not being able to superintend our studies any longer. The two lessons a week from Papa in the evening, when he was fagged out after a long day's work, was all the guidance we had in those days, so really if we were not included in the category of "Child wonders" it was hardly to be wondered at!

Scarcely had we recovered from the "Heinrich Werner" humiliation than we were harrowed by the advent of another youthful genius with the imposing name of John Sebastian Bach Mills who, we were informed by his father, could play the forty-eight Preludes and Fugues of Bach from memory. This was something so far ahead of our own attainments that we could only remain stricken with silent awe as we listened to his brilliant performance. How did it happen that such a talent was the offspring of a plain little man of little or no musical account, while we, — well, there, it was useless to reason or argue about it! We realized that Papa was justified in feeling disappointed in us. For what had we achieved after all? We had now reached the bed rock of humility. There was no pride left in us! Had it not been for our pastoral theatricals and the distractions afforded by our rabbits, pigeons, hens and chickens, we should indeed have been forlorn children!

Since coming to live at Monson Villa, Mamma had developed some taste as an amateur poultry-fancier. She quite prided herself on her rare breeds of Cochin Chinas and Brahmas, often paying extravagant prices for a setting of eggs for the raising of these aristocratic birds.

Rosie and I had each private ownership of a bantam. Mine, white by nature, but of manifold shades by habit, we named appropriately "Guttergrub." To Rosie's neat little speckled hen we accorded the respectable name of "Bettie." Of course their eggs were deemed by us superior to any others, even to those of Mamma's famous Brahmas.

We possessed no toys of any kind save a few stray marbles which Dom used to obtain from his schoolfellows by swapping loot from the "Lucky Corner" and a few rare purchases made with the occasional pennies we were allowed for pocket money. It is true I was the actual possessor of a most magnificent wax doll, presented to me by one of Papa's pupils, an up-to-date doll which opened and shut its eyes, dressed in the most delicate of embroidered robes, but Mamma kept it put away in a drawer in the "guests' room," so-called, and we were permitted to play with it only now and then as a great treat. This toy starvation would seem very unnatural, nay even pitiful, to the young people of to-day; but it should be remembered that in those days our shops were not stocked with toys "made in Germany." There were but few varieties and such as they were they were expensive.

The times were different. Even Christmas was not celebrated as it is now, with its plethora of presents of all kinds; it was principally an occasion for feasting, something more like our Thanksgiving. It was a day always associated with roast beef and plum pudding, or better still, roast goose and apple sauce, generally preceded by boiled cod with oyster sauce. When friends wished to mark the occasion by some special attention, it was the custom to send a hamper containing either game, domestic birds, or a haunch of venison, frequently with the addition of the head and shoulders of a huge cod accompanied by a tiny barrel of native oysters. It was also the custom for one's grocer to send a "Christmas Box" to each of his customers, consisting of raisins, almonds, figs, and other goodies. That about sums up the whole of our Christmas celebration, the "Christmas Tree" being a later importation from Germany. Yet withal there was always a general Christmas atmosphere of joyous excitement. There were the carol singers who took up their stand under our windows on Christmas Eve, chanting "Christ was born in Bethlehem" and other carols. All the shops were decorated profusely with holly and mistletoe, and there was an unwonted display of choice poultry and fruit. The butchers' shops in particular were made positively attractive by row upon row of dressed carcasses hanging outside the shops, outvying with each other in a luxury of pink and white flesh and fat, profusely decorated with satin rosettes of many colours and holly sprays. Those carcasses, split open and stretched to their fullest capacity, suggested an exultant note which effaced all conception of the slaughter house. — A new picture of "Death Triumphant," a butcher's shop transformed into a thing of beauty!

It was during the latter period of our residence at Monson Villa that gas was first introduced for lighting the streets, and well I remember the alarming opinions expressed by some of our wiseacres that, when lighted, the gas would surely blow up the lamp-posts and that a series of terrible explosions would ensue! Our domestic illumination was chiefly with candles, except in our large living room, where we used a "Moderator Lamp" fed with whale oil, kerosene being still hidden in the bowels of the earth. We used to sit around the table reading or studying just as well satisfied with our whale-oil lamp as we are to-day with the luxury of electric illumination.

Let it be noted that at the time I am writing of, only old, real old people wore spectacles. Perhaps we might find some relation between the old-fashioned "Moderator lamp" and that fact.

Several babies came and went back into the unknown while we lived at Monson Villa, so in spite of the agitation of repeated births we still remained only four in family, Domenico, Rosamond, myself and Julius, who was eighteen months younger than I. He, dear boy, had remained since infancy curiously childish and undeveloped, unwilling to study, but loving to poke around and make friends with animals. There was quite an extraordinary freemasonary between himself and all elementary living creatures. Both the wildest and the most timid of these, whether beast or bird, would go to him as much as to say, "You are one of us. You understand!" My parents did not discover till he reached adolescence that the arrest of his mental faculties was the result of an injury to his spine suffered in infancy through the carelessness of his nurse.

Though an unwilling student, however, Julius was by no means lacking in intelligence. He had certain gifts that were peculiar to him and not shared by the rest of us. He was a keen observer of little things which escaped most people, he had a grim sense of humour, and he was immensely clever with his hands in carrying out some quite ingenious inventions of his own and in constructing things out of all sorts of odds and ends. I have always deplored that Papa did not have Julius taught some handicraft in his early youth, so that he might have turned to account his natural gifts, which were flickered away in a sort of slovenly amateurishness. But the all-pervading caste prejudice would have made the idea of turning him loose in a carpenter's shop impossible! Thank Heaven, society is less hide-bound to-day than it was then! As it was, it was tacitly understood by us all that Julius was to go through life as a man of leisure, free from all responsibilities. No one, however, could know Julius in all the childlike simplicity of his nature without being touched by the kindliness of his disposition and his unfailing desire to compensate for any shortcomings by rendering service in every way within his power.

CHAPTER X

GOVERNESSES AND TUTORS — A SELECT SCHOOL — A LITTLE REBEL — COMMENT ON SCHOOLING — THE "CONCERTINA" — GIULIO REGONDI

AS I have already indicated, our education began at home with governesses. Our first was an English lady of decayed fortune and mild attainments. Our second, a shrewish little French woman. Both of these, in their turn, lived in our house, whereupon it soon became evident that resident governesses were a nuisance in our establishment. After this unsuccessful experiment Papa engaged tutors who came every day for three hours to instruct us. I have only a dim recollection of our first tutor, but the second I remember well.

He was a broad Scotchman who taught Latin and Greek in the Grammar School. He and I were great friends, for he used to defend my phonetic mode of spelling. When Dom and Rosie laughed at me for writing skool, streem, bort, woonded, and so forth, Doctor Grier used to say I was quite right; that they *ought* to be spelt that way; that my spelling was evidence of the correctness of my ear for sounds. He never seemed to take much interest in our general studies, but was always in a hurry to get over them and turn to his beloved "claassics," as he pronounced it.

Our lessons then consisted in reading and translating the first book of "Virgil," which we liked to do very well, and later, in wrestling with "Xenophon," which did not meet with the same favour. The one study which made a lasting impression on me, and which has since enhanced to a great extent both my enjoyment and my facility in acquiring foreign languages was that of the derivations of words from the Latin and Greek. It has since proved of unfailing interest and value to me.

The time finally arrived, my father thought, for us to study German, as it was his intention to send us to Germany eventually to complete our musical education. It happened opportunely that a certain Doctor Blanke, a German by both birth and education, was recommended as being not only a capable, but a needy Professor, recently settled in Cheltenham with his family. My large-hearted mother, always benevolently inclined, became interested in his struggles to support his family and sympathized with his regret at having quitted "a brilliant position as Professor in one of the German Universities," in the deluded hope of securing a more lucrative position in England. She found the means to help him substantially on receiving from him the assurance that he was fully equipped to undertake our education in all its branches. Accordingly, my father was easily persuaded to increase Doctor Blanke's income by installing him as tutor to the entire family in place of Doctor Grier, who had just accepted a post elsewhere in some college. So now it was Doctor Blanke who came every day for three hours. He never left us empty-handed; there was always a basket of fruit, vegetables and eggs for his wife and children — heaped up with a generous hand.

Within a year Dom was sent to a school in Neuwide, as he seemed to be making little progress in German. He only remained there a year, however, being recalled on account of a run-down condition due to poor nourishment in the German school. Meanwhile he had learned to speak German, which we had not. But Doctor Blanke, unwilling to admit any superiority to his own pupils, scornfully called it "Kitchen German."

Doctor Blanke was the last of our tutors. When Rosie was in her thirteenth year and I was in my tenth, we were sent to a private and very select school, kept by two maiden ladies of the "immaculate" type. Only the daughters of the "aristocracy" of Cheltenham were received there, and that no exception was taken to the daughters of a "professional man" was due, I fancy, to the high esteem in which my father was held by the parents of two of their pupils, who appreciated his rare personality. The Misses Borden perhaps felt that under the circumstances they might condescend to receive the daughters of a "bread winner"!

Rosie and I fairly loathed the rarified atmosphere of the Misses Borden. We were constantly made to feel our "social inferiority" to the daughters of the idle rich who kept their carriages and who brought the Misses Borden peaches and grapes from their greenhouses. Our musical attainments and Papa's artistic reputation counted for nothing with them; both were entirely ignored, for Cheltenham knew no such thing as Art; it could only understand the cut-and-dried class distinctions of provincialism at that period.

The instruction we received was to me boresome in the extreme. We were dosed with what they called "Sacred Geography," maps of the Holy Land marking the precise position where anything happened that was told in the Bible. Our religious training, so called, was very strict. Each day we were made to read aloud chapters from the Sacred Book, our private designation of Genesis 5 and 11 being "the begats." / I have since had occasion to feel very grateful to Miss Borden, however, for correcting every least fault in enunciation, pronunciation and accentuation, and for making me acquainted with the meaning of every unfamiliar word in reading aloud our history, thereby constantly enlarging our vocabulary.

English history I found much more interesting reading than "the begats." Every chapter of our English history book was headed by a picture of the reiginng monarch of that period, and on these innocent portraitures I used to vent my righteous wrath at tyranny and cruelty. Thus Queen Elizabeth was furnished with a bristly moustache and sharp, projecting teeth, her eyes coloured with green chalk, and underneath the summing up of her character in the two words "Jealous beast." My sympathy with Mary, Queen of Scots, was expressed in "poor dear." Queen Anne was furnished with a halo, and so forth. Of course I was severely censured for these wanton proceedings, a sense of humour not being included in the make-up of either of the Misses Borden!

One supreme torture inflicted on us was the obligation not only to attend Trinity Church on Sundays, but also to bring to school next day a written synopsis of the sermon. This was a terrible task, for either my thoughts would wander, or else the monotonous tones of the minister made me drowsy. One Sunday it happened that a young curate officiated. He was one of those tight-jawed Englishmen who economize both space and action by reducing the aperture of the mouth to a minimum. His peculiar mannerism and utter incomprehensibility had for me a certain strange fascination. It was a new experience and I actually listened attentively to see how much I could understand of his peculiar jargon. The only two words I could make out in the whole sermon were "Candlesticks" and "Brethren." These two words, accordingly, I faithfully recorded to do duty as my synopsis of the sermon. When I handed my paper to Miss Borden next day she frowned and said sharply, "What's this?"

"It is all I could understand of the sermon," I replied meekly.

She quietly tore up my paper without comment, but from that time she never again insisted on my taking down the sermon.

As I look back on those — my school days — I realize that I was a very rebellious young person and that the scornful attitude assumed by me in defiance of the snobbish class-distinction which fretted me only served to augment Miss Borden's disapproval of my class. Rosie, who was less sensitive and of a more conciliatory disposition than I, fared much better. She was a good scholar and always as tractable as I was rebellious, so that there was no excuse for finding fault with my schooling. Later, however, things went more smoothly with me. I won some favour by my literary compositions on given themes, which differed somewhat, I believe, from the usual trite utterances of the average schoolgirl. Miss Borden, rather to my surprise, read some of these essays of mine aloud to the rest of the class — not out of compliment to me, I am sure — but perhaps with the idea of stimulating the other girls, who were all much older than I, to rise above the commonplace. There were six others in our class, their ages ranging from sixteen to twenty, whereas Rosie was in her fifteenth year and I was only twelve when we left school to go to Germany.

After that there were no more schoolbooks for me; it was to be music, henceforth, and music only. I do not think I have ever looked into a schoolbook from that day to this!

I have frequently been asked whether my too brief period of schooling has ever been a source of regret to me in after years? Whether I have felt myself handicapped in any way because of it? To be perfectly sincere, my answer must be no. The things which according to convention I was forced into learning I have long since quite forgotten, for they were not the things which I, at that time, wanted to know. When, however, all schooling was behind me, my mind began to reach out naturally for knowledge of the special things it craved. I obtained the answers to my questionings from books and from people wiser than myself. I became an ambulating note of interrogation, and, I fear, something of a nuisance to my learned friends. But these gleanings of knowledge so eagerly sought were never forgotten. I may say that my education actually began after I had left school. So, on the whole, although to-day I still do my reckoning by the rule of thumb, and Doctor Syntax might have died at birth for all I can recall of his rules, I am conscious that my mind, unlike a house furnished with all sorts of things prescribed by custom but ill adapted to the use of its owner — things crowding out many of the essentials which make for comfort — is instead stored with such information as conforms to my particular needs, and that my mind is not so cluttered up with half-digested facts that there remains no room for more, or for a free range of original thought.

Far be it from me, however, to advocate a scant education for others. I merely cite my own personal experience with honesty. Other minds naturally receptive to the kind of learning which for me had no interest doubtless draw profit where I did not.

An effective little instrument called the "concertina" was much in vogue at that time both in drawing-rooms and concerts. It was first brought into popularity by Giulio Regondi, the greatest guitar virtuoso of his day, though the instrument was patented as far back as 1829.

Regondi discovered that wonderful effects could be produced on it, so after mastering its possibilities he adopted it in all his concerts instead of confining himself to the guitar. One half of his programme was always devoted to it, and so successful were his performances that many compositions for the instrument were published. Molique wrote a concerto for concertina and orchestra, and Regondi himself wrote two concertos for it. Nor was there any dearth of lighter musical literature for it, as any violin, flute, oboe music or songs could be played on it without alteration, as it had a compass of four octaves and a complete chromatic scale. It also had double action, and the same note could be sustained by either pressing or drawing the bellows, so that both staccato and sostenuto effects were perfect.

The instrument was hexagonal with a keyboard at each end of an expansible bellows, the sound being produced by pressure of air from the bellows on free metallic reeds.

Regondi gave a concert in Cheltenham which Rosie and I attended, and I was so fascinated with the unusual effects to which the instrument lent itself that I was seized with a strong desire to play it myself.

Papa bought me a concertina, and when, as it happened shortly after, Richard Blagrove, a pupil of Regondi, came to Cheltenham to teach it, he let me take lessons of him. I improved rapidly and soon learned to play quite well.

The concertina has now become a thing of the past; only a few people to-day have ever heard of it. This may be because there never were more than three or four really effective public performers on the instrument, and they have passed out of existence. When they ceased to be before the public the concertina "culte" gradually died out among amateurs. It was but a shortlived fad of fashion, much like bicycle riding.

CHAPTER XI

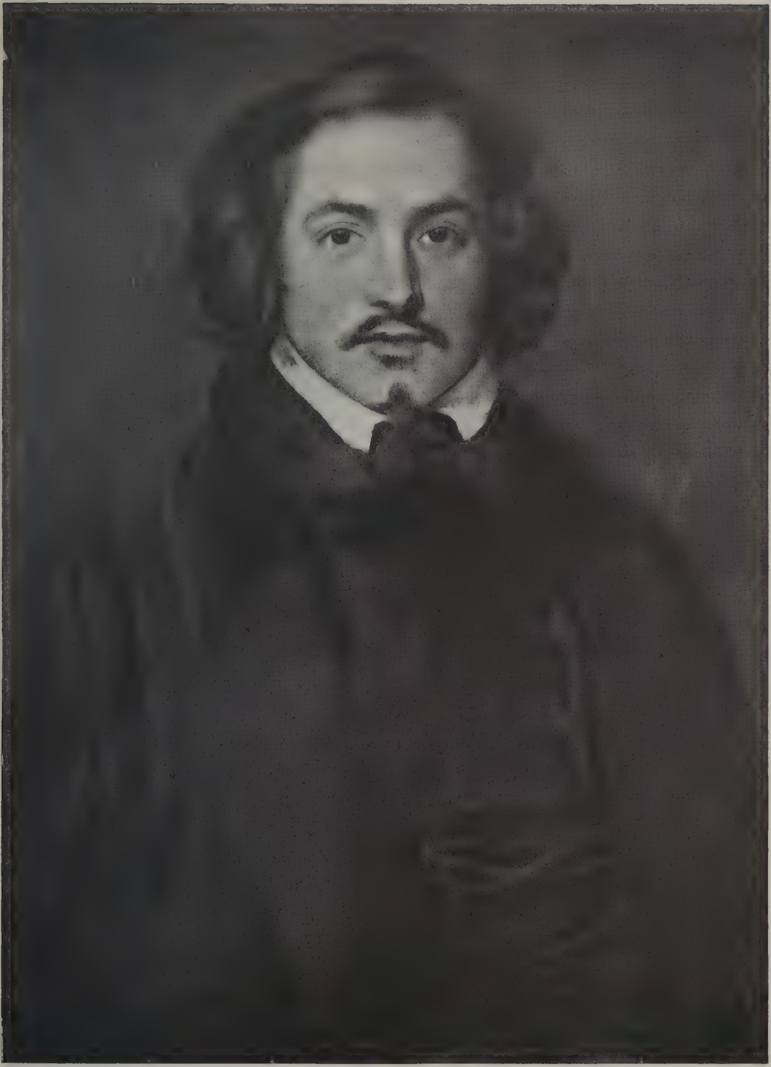
FRIENDS OF THE HOUSE — MY FATHER'S LIBRARY — CONTRABAND LITERATURE — PERCY HOUSE — PRYING EYES AND LISTENING EARS — DABBLERS IN SCIENCE — PREPARING FOR MIGRATION — HO! FOR GERMANY

VERY few people were admitted to our house on terms of intimacy. One of the few was a Miss Townsend, a kindly and lovable maiden lady of narrow but independent means who was devoted to our family. There was always a place at our table for her. Another occasional visitor was a red-cheeked, prim and acrid little woman who was constantly calling Mamma's attention to our lapses from good behavior, which resulted naturally in our showing ourselves invariably at our very worst in her presence. We disliked her heartily and never had interest enough in her even to find out what her name was. Dom had once for all christened her "Old Crab Apple," a name entirely satisfactory and promptly adopted by the rest of us. "Here comes old 'Crab Apple'" was his usual way of announcing her visits, nor did he take pains to lower his voice to a stage whisper.

Another visitor was an old friend of Mamma's whom she had consorted with in London, — Mrs. Lloyd. She had come to live temporarily in Cheltenham with her son, then a raw lad of about fifteen, since well known to fame in England as the tenor, Edward Lloyd.

The only others were Doctor Ker, the homeopathist, and Mr. Waite, the librarian, who were Papa's particular cronies and were always introduced at once into his study when they came. Mr. Waite usually stayed till late into the night discussing certain articles which appeared in *The Reasoner*, a magazine of "free thought," which was of course regarded as heresy in those days. Rosie and I often used to creep into the study early in the evening and sit quietly in a corner while they discussed a fearsome logic which engulfed the accepted idea of the Creation as set forth in Genesis. We listened with acute interest, and although we could not take it all in, we got enough from it to sow seeds of scepticism in our youthful minds.

By that time I had acquired a great taste for reading. One whole side of Papa's study was occupied by bookshelves stocked with a rare and unusual collection of works ancient and modern. I spent hours daily among those books. Nothing was too ambitious or too profound for me. Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Pericles, Marcus Aurelius, all was grist that came to my mill! Of course I did not understand half that I read, but what of that? The less I understood of it the more charm it had for me. And I suppose I really must have got something from it after all! Sometimes, as a great treat, Papa allowed us to look over a curious old Atlas, the blank leaves of which were covered by original sketches in pen and ink made by William Thackeray. Many of them were tentative illustrations for his books made in my father's bachelor days when he, Thackeray, Cruickshank, Mathews and other shining lights of that period used to foregather in the evening in good fellowship over their grog. Thackeray had a habit of drawing on the flyleaves of any book which happened to be within reach, while conversation was going on, and my father's old Atlas with its broad leaves was to him a



JOHN BARNETT, (1802-1890), FATHER OF THE AUTHOR
From a portrait painted in 1830 by Baugnait, now in the National Portrait Gallery, London

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perfect treasure trove. Papa prized this relic of glad bachelor days spent in good company, and he never allowed the Atlas to be removed from his study.

When our lease of Monson Villa had run out, my father received notice that the estate had been sold for building purposes. The grounds on which the fine old house stood, the garden which was the scene of thrilling dramas, of so many joys and of some sorrows was to be transformed into a handsome Terrace. The insatiable desire for novelty, for new scenes and new experiences tempered our grief at bidding a last farewell to the dear old place. Our parents found for us a new abode in a more fashionable quarter of the town. Percy House, on Wellington Square, was henceforward to be our dwelling place. It was a very attractive house, with a nice garden both at the back and front, and a pretty conservatory. But we had to give up keeping our pet hens, pigeons and rabbits in this aristocratic neighbourhood. That, however, was not as great a grief to us as might be imagined, for we were beginning to find interest in quite other pursuits. We were now promoted to a more intimate companionship with Papa. He not only tolerated but encouraged our presence in his study to our infinite satisfaction. Our interest in all the treasures collected therein was unbounded, so that Rosie and I were frequently to be found hanging around. Papa's sanctum did not have the same attraction for Domenico, who seldom was of the party.

I remember well a certain phrenological chart which fascinated us beyond measure. To our eyes it appeared as the bust of a man with a map traced on his head. Papa liked to explain the significance of the different bumps and indentations of the human cranium, as represented on the chart, — telling us what characteristics they indicated. Rosie and I soon became experts in locating different vices, virtues, and talents by that method, and every member of our household had in their turn to submit their restive heads to our inquisitive fingers. He initiated us also in the study of a book entitled "Notes on Noses" which contained pictures of all the different types of noses belonging to the different races and what those different types stood for in the characters of their owners. So greatly did the theories impress me that I find myself to this day classifying the noses of the people I meet and almost unconsciously noticing that so and so's nose is a "Graeco cogitativo," that therefore he must be of a reflective and contemplative habit. Again I find myself judging another to be a man of action because of that "aquilino Romano" nose, and so forth.

In the study there was also a nice collection of fossils, all labelled and classified, for Papa was also a dabbler in geology. After reading Chambers' "Vestiges of Creation" he had become vastly interested in collecting these petrified proofs of a world gradually evolved in ages and ages rather than suddenly created by fiat. These new theories he imparted to us quite freely in view of our sympathetic interest in the subject, consequently we were fired with a desire to add new specimens to his collection. Accordingly we used to sally forth, hammer in hand, whenever there was a chance for a country walk, accompanied by Julius, whose keen eyesight stood us in good stead. Every heap of stones piled by the wayside became for us a central point of attraction. We were very quick to see the least sign of a petrified fish or shell in these stones quarried from our hillsides. We found Leckhampton Hill to be the richest in fossils, so we turned our steps mostly in that direction. Our imaginations were fired by the theory that once upon a time what is now the Vale of Gloucester was all one great sea; that the Malvern Hills as well as our Cotteswold range were hidden in the bed of the sea, with limpets and other crustacea on their surface in lieu of grass and wild flowers, and honeycombed with all kinds of queer little salt-water creatures, the living originals of the fossils we were hunting for. It made the world we were living in a very wonderful and mysterious one!

A short time before we quitted Monson Villa to take up our abode at Percy House our family was increased by the birth of twin brothers, who were duly named Reginald and Eugene. They at once became the most important members of our household, petted and spoiled by all of us, and no wonder, for they were most intelligent, amusing and lively little mites!

I may as well add here and now, that the twins, as they grew up, escaped all the discipline that had been our lot. They always from the first did pretty much as they pleased and managed to have their own way in everything, our theory respecting the extraordinary license accorded them being that our parents had grown tired of bringing up children!

After we had completed our two years of painful schooling in the aristocratic and rarefied atmosphere of the Misses Borden's establishment, our parents began to consider seriously the plan of sending us to Germany, where, it was believed, the most thorough musical education was to be obtained and under better conditions than in our own country. After due inquiries the Leipzig Conservatory of Music was decided on for training.

It happened that our superior cousin, John Francis

Barnett, was about to betake himself thither by the advice and with the assistance of the Broadwoods firm, then at the head of the pianoforte manufacturing industry in London. This fact convinced our parents that their projected scheme was a wise one. We were informed also that the precocious young genius who reeled off Bach's fugues from memory, John Sebastian Bach Mills, had already been dispatched to the Leipzig Conservatory to perfect himself as a pianist and general musician. Papa ascertained through Mills' father that Louis Plaidy was the best teacher there for a thorough grounding in the technique of piano playing, and he advised that we, by all means, attend his classes rather than those of Wensel, who did not concern himself much with technical work.

It was finally decided that the wrench was to be made; that Papa would surrender all the comforts of domestic life by moving his entire family to Leipzig. The change was to be made during the summer vacation when he would be able to personally accompany us and get us properly settled in our foreign abode.

I do not think that any of us children had the faintest conception of the colossal sacrifice that was being made by our parents in order to afford us this great opportunity! It meant that our poor little mother was to live apart from her husband for an indefinite period, shouldering the entire responsibility of the welfare of six rampant children in a foreign country, without knowing aught of foreign customs and without speaking a word of German. It also meant that our father, whose strenuous life had been rendered bearable through the tender ministrations of one of the most devoted of wives, was henceforth doomed to live alone in bachelor quarters, with no one to minister to his creature comforts, or to encourage him in the moments of depression that all flesh is heir to.

We took no thought of all this, taking it for granted that it was all happening in the common course of things and calmly oblivious of everything save the glad anticipation of the wonderful new life in a new world which was to be opened out to us.

All the ugly details of breaking up our household and making preparations for our journey passed over my head, making no impression on me whatever. I was living on the heights! Visions of future greatness began to take shape in my mind. I was wild with anticipation! I created my own images of what lay before us. I pictured to myself the Conservatory, the teachers, the surroundings. I carried on imaginary conversations with people; my whole inner consciousness was already in Leipzig. Now, at last, I thought, whatever of talent was in me would have a chance to spread its wings freely and unafraid!

PART II

STUDENT LIFE AT THE LEIPZIG CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AND IN BERLIN

CHAPTER I

CRUSHED ILLUSIONS — THE CONSERVATORY — AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR — A BLOW — A COMPROMISE — PASSING THE TESTS — FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONSERVATORY — THE METHODS COMPARED WITH MODERN SCHOOLS — DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS — A CONSERVATIVE DIRECTOR

AT Leipzig at last! Our Artistic Mecca! Alas, it was here I had my first experience of how painfully the Real can fall short of the Ideal! Leipzig was to us actually a very forlorn and uncomfortable place during those first days of strangeness while we were struggling to get our bearings. After a brief sojourn in a hotel we were transferred to an apartment in the Fleischergasse, a dingy, poky, unlovely street, and here our brave little mother started housekeeping under unspeakable difficulties. Where, oh, where was the freedom of spirit so ardently longed for? Surely not in that dingy flat. The surroundings were simply paralyzing to the spirit. Neither aspiration nor inspiration could exist there. I was deeply disappointed and very unhappy in those first days! But then came the thought of the Conservatorium! That, after all, was to be the real thing; the rest did not matter!

It was with a throbbing heart that I joined our little family procession wending its way to that famous

Temple of Art, there to make preliminary inquiries about tuition fees and other general requirements. On reaching Friedrichstrasse according to directions received, we saw no sign of a building corresponding to the dignity of the Temple of Art our fancy had pictured. After we had walked from one end of the street to the other, bewildered and helpless, a passer-by, in response to Papa's anxious interrogation "*Wo ist das Conservatorium?*" indicated the entrance into an uninviting courtyard, on the right-hand side of which was an ugly stone structure resembling a warehouse of some sort, — anything rather than the Temple of Art of my visions! To the left of it was a little low-roofed outhouse, allotted to the janitor and general factotum, Herr Quasdorff. At the further end of the courtyard stood a veritable warehouse, outside of which were piled up untidy heaps of logs, a bluish purple, to be used, I was told, in the production of indigo. Architecturally, neither the Conservatorium nor the indigo warehouse could claim precedence one over the other. And this was the bright spot of my dreams! Was life, then, to be simply a succession of disillusions?

An interview which Papa then had with the Janitor, Quasdorff, led to one with the Director, Doctor Schleinitz, which took place at his private dwelling. From him Papa soon ascertained all necessary particulars. He was a very dignified person, though not by any means unapproachable or unkindly. He received us graciously and made many inquiries about our previous musical opportunities and education. These, I think, however, could not have impressed him as anything particularly brilliant! Turning a friendly gaze suddenly on me, he asked, "And this Frauleinchen, what is she to do in Leipzig?"

"She is here to study music in the Conservatorium, together with her brother and sister," Papa replied.

"Indeed," exclaimed Doctor Schleinitz, "but she is only a child. How old is she?"

"Twelve last January," answered my mother, "but I can assure you that in her music she is quite as advanced as either her sister or brother. She plays Beethoven's Sonatas with not a whit less musical intelligence than they do."

"So—o?" murmured Doctor Schleinitz; "but I am sorry to tell you that no students are admitted to the Conservatorium under fifteen years of age."

This was like a blow to me! I turned away to hide the unbidden tears that coursed down my cheeks. It would hardly be possible for any one to picture the agony of despair which seized on me! To think that a barrier of two years and a half should stand unrelentingly between me and my heart's desire! Oh, the injustice of it! I knew that I was as ready to stand the tests as either Rosie or Dom; then why allow the mere passage of a paltry two or three years to keep me back? Oh, it was cruel!

My parents heard the ruthless verdict of the Director with scarcely less dismay than I, for they were considering not so much my disappointment as the awkward fact that either my term of training would have to be curtailed, or else Mamma's absence from home, as well as that of my brother and sister, would have to be prolonged for at least two years and a half.

This aspect of the case was duly explained by Papa with the result that Doctor Schleinitz, who seemed really impressed with the hardship of the case, compromised to the extent of promising that if, on examination, I showed the proper degree of advancement to meet the standard, the matter would be duly taken into consideration, and that possibly, in spite of its being against the rule and wholly unprecedented, I might after all be admitted as a student.

The cloud began to lift from my oppressed spirit, for I felt an inward conviction that I should pass the ordeal. It never occurred to me to doubt it for a moment. Nor did my intuition play me false. I went through with the tests, was pronounced up to the standard, and was forthwith admitted as a student in the Leipzig Conservatorium.

In reaction from my temporary despair I was now transported to the seventh heaven of the Elect. There was now nothing too great for my reach! I pictured myself already a great artist with the world at my feet! What would have to be achieved between then and the time of tuition was a mere incident which did not trouble my thought. All I sought was opportunity, a something I had never had. What I would make out of it was a foregone conclusion in my callow mind. The chance was mine, and that was enough. I could have danced for joy on a silken thread or floated in the heavens on a fluffy cloudlet.

My state of mind in those first days of student life was one of absolute acquiescence. Everything was, and must be right because it was the way of the Leipzig Conservatorium. To question anything, to imagine the existence of any different or superior methods never could have occurred to me. All was accepted without question. I felt quite happy when I was within its unlovely walls; in fact, their unloveliness did not matter in the least after the first shock of surprise was over. My grown-up classmates (they all seemed terribly grown up to me!) treated me as a sort of pet. Apparently I was regarded as something of a curiosity, — a child of twelve, English too, who had been, they said, pronounced *sehr musikalisch*, was an entirely new species, a something not indigenous to the Conservatorium. I, for my part, sat on their laps and allowed my head to be patted and stroked as a matter of course. It was all very nice, and I liked it.

As compared with our music schools of to-day, the Leipzig Conservatorium as it was in 1857 stands out conspicuously for the simplicity of its régime and its limited curriculum. But that was how it was conceived and planned by Mendelssohn, whose aspiration it was to cherish and to propagate all that was highest and best in music and to send forth into the world earnest and thoroughly grounded musicians. The studies were few and simple. Piano, Organ, Harmony, Counterpoint, Orchestration and Composition, Violin, 'Cello and Voice, Choral practice and Orchestral playing. There was no instruction in dramatics, nor yet in languages, German, I presume, being regarded as the only language worthy of music!

As one recalls this simple régime and its actual results one is set to questioning whether the more advanced methods of to-day, the elaborate and all-embracing curriculums, are really making for a greater degree of excellence. Whether the numerous collateral studies offered in our Conservatories of Music do not, perhaps, result in a diffusion of energy which should be concentrated to produce great artists. This question often occurs to me as I note the ever-growing propensity of the rising generation to acquire a smattering of this and that rather than to devote themselves rigorously to any one study until its difficulties are mastered.

My more mature experience has taught me that it is only by following closely one purposeful study at a time that we ever get to the heart of our subject. From that center new vistas open out in all directions. We then quite naturally begin to try our own experiments and to reach our own conclusions instead of merely following prescribed directions and covering a beaten track. Collateral studies then inevitably invite us in their own good time, and we approach them with a fresh and an eager interest, born of a comprehensive appreciation of their value, which intelligent appreciation could not have existed at the outset of our study. It is thus, I believe, that the Master Mind is developed; it is thus that the Artist comes into being! To *want* to know is already the first step to knowledge!

The list of teachers offered at the Conservatorium was not a long one, but what famous, what distinguished men they were! All could boast a notable musical past.

There was Ignaz Moscheles, one of the most celebrated pianists of his time, besides being a thorough musician and prolific composer. He had been the teacher of Mendelssohn as well as his bosom friend. Thalberg was also a pupil of his. He was the intimate and treasured friend of Beethoven, Schumann and most of the famous virtuosi and literati of his day, — a period particularly rich in distinguished artists.

Then there was Ferdinand David, one of the really great violinists of the past, teacher of Joachim, Wilhelmj, and a host of other celebrities, — himself a pupil of Spohr. He had remained leader of the Gewandhaus Orchestra ever since Mendelssohn first wielded the baton at those memorable concerts.

Dreyshock, who played at the same desk as David at the concerts, prepared the violinists for the more advanced instruction of David. He also was a fine violinist in his own right.

The two piano teachers who prepared the ground for Moscheles to cultivate were Louis Plaidy, whose technical method stood in high repute, and Wenzel, the devotee and accepted interpreter of Schumann. The three graded teachers of harmony and counterpoint were Doctor Papperitz, Richter and Hauptman. Papperitz taught the ground work of harmony, Richter the intricacies of counterpoint, and Hauptman, the greatest contrapuntist of his time, carried the most advanced pupils into the beyond of contrapuntal part writing, — canons and fugues. Hauptman was director of the Thomas Schule, — one-time function of John Sebastian Bach, whose house, by the way, he occupied.

Julius Rietz, who succeeded Mendelssohn as conductor of the Gewandhaus Concerts and general functions of *Kapellmeister*, had charge of the classes in instrumentation and original composition. He was also a fine violoncello player. He frequently took part in the ensemble lessons, he playing the 'cello and David the violin to the piano accompaniment of the pupils.

Grützmacker, leading violoncellist of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, was the teacher of that instrument. He was a fine player with a suberb tone and perfect execution. He also used sometimes to play to us in the ensemble lessons, alternating with Rietz.

Singing was taught by Professor Goetze, who was famous in Germany as a teacher at that time.

The organ was taught by Richter, who gave his lessons in the church, as there was no organ in the Conservatorium building, only an attachment of organ pedals to a time-honoured piano in a remote classroom.

Professor Brendal, a learned pundit, lectured on music. These comprised the entire faculty of this world-famed institution, which then harbored the modest number of one hundred and eighteen students.

Our Director, Doctor Schleinitz, took no active part in the musical education of the students and was only in evidence at the weekly *Abendunterhaltungen* (evening entertainments) and the examination sessions. He used, however, to encourage us to go to his home to talk over our aspirations and our affairs with him. He was not of a genial disposition, quiet dignity being his most marked characteristic, but he was always kindly in his attitude and interested in our concerns. He never failed to emphasize his lasting grief for the loss of his beloved friend, Mendelssohn, whose portrait, draped in black, was a conspicuous feature in his parlor. That Mendelssohn on his side had a deep respect as well as friendship for Schleinitz was manifest in the fact that he confided to him not only the disposal of his manuscript but also the guardianship of his children.

His musical outlook was by no means broad. According to him, no music worthy of consideration had been written since Mendelssohn's day. This attitude, with which Moscheles was thoroughly in sympathy, had the effect of restricting the musical taste of the average student.

Compositions by Chopin or Schumann were admitted only on sufferance, a painful fact tacitly understood by all. Thalberg's music and all show pieces were unreservedly ruled out as beneath contempt, and as for Wagner, — his name was never mentioned as a musician! It is fortunate that there was no Debussy or Ravel in those days, as any admirers of theirs would have been consigned to an insane asylum. And as for

Schoenberg, Scriabine and that ilk, one dares not picture what might have befallen any of their followers! Russian composers had not yet been heard from, nor Polish either, with the exception of Chopin, or doubtless they also would have been tabooed. An utter contempt for all Italian music dating from Rossini was the order of the day. It was regarded as the scum of musical thought, and Verdi as a mere musical mountebank. The only pronounced dissenter among the faculty was Wensel, who worshipped at the shrine of Schumann. His pupils, all of whom naturally followed his lead, mixed but little with the pupils of Plaidy, who did not encourage the Schumann cult, but highly approved Chopin, whose music lent itself to an effective display of the brilliant technique which was his specialty.

As we had never had any instruction in harmony Papa decided to let us have private lessons of Doctor Papperitz, who accordingly came twice a week to our apartment. After he had put us through the rudiments, which we learned quite readily, it became his custom to have me sit at a distant corner of the room with my back to the piano while he played all the different intervals to test the exactness of my musical ear. As that seemed like child's play to me, he soon took to playing all sorts of chords and discords that I might identify their component parts by ear. Finding that I never hesitated in my response, he tried to puzzle me with harmonized phrases and sudden modulations, but he never succeeded in confusing me, for as I happened to possess the gift of absolute pitch, I could always tell at once with every change what key he was playing in. It soon became evident that he was playing this little game of musical bluff with me for his own amusement!

After a short course of harmony lessons from Doctor Papperitz it seemed unnecessary to take private lessons any longer. After the first term with him in the Conservatorium both Rosie and I entered Richter's class, the highest promotion ever conceded to female students in those days. There was no composition class for my sex, no woman composer having yet appeared on the musical horizon with the exception of Mendelssohn's sister, Fanny Hensel, who showed some talent in that direction, and also Clara Schumann. None of the girl students in the Conservatorium, however, had ever shown any bent for composition, therefore a composition class seemed to be superfluous.

As our younger brother, Julius, had never been taught even the rudiments of music — in spite of the fact that he had never shown any disposition for it — Mamma thought it might be a wise experiment to have him taught by an advanced student of the Conservatorium who was highly recommended to us. This was no other than Hermann Levi, who received the munificent sum of twenty-five cents in American money for an hour's instruction. But poor Julius was a hopeless case, and Levi, with all his patience, could make nothing of him. His martyrdom, however, was not of long duration, for Levi left the Conservatorium a few months later and began to mount the first steps of his brilliant career as orchestral conductor. When, many years later, we found him in Bayreuth, installed in all his dignity as one of the elect conductors of the Wagner operas, it was impossible to associate him mentally with the good-natured, curly-headed youth who came to our apartment to teach Julius and who foregathered chummily with us afterwards.

CHAPTER II

CHANGE OF ABODE — SOCIAL PLEASURES FORBIDDEN — AN INVITATION — THE "DUTCH TREAT" — PLAIDY AND HIS MOTHER — SUNDAY EVENING MUSICAL ORGIES — MILLS' LOVE AFFAIR — GOOD FELLOWSHIP IN MUSIC

IT became daily more and more insufferable to occupy the dingy flat into which we had stumbled on our arrival. The gloom, discomfort and unsanitariness of it were beginning to affect Mamma's health and spirits. Fortunately, Papa had only agreed to rent it by the month. As the time was approaching for him to return to Cheltenham to resume his professional duties, he set about looking for a more suitable abode for us. Having already formed friendly relations with Plaidy and Papperitz, both of whom frequented our apartment in the Fleischergasse — consequently realizing our discomfort — he consulted them, with the result that we learned from one or the other that there was an attractive flat for rent in a building owned by Irmler, the pianoforte manufacturer. Irmler himself with his family occupied the first floor; the second was vacant. The building was pleasantly situated in a large garden with plenty of open space. Mamma at once took kindly to it, for the apartment was both roomy and commodious. On either side of a long corridor were good square rooms sufficient for us all, without crowding. A generous sized music room and large dining room overlooking the garden made eloquent appeal to Mamma after the Fleischergasse restrictions, and last but not least, there was a decent kitchen! Without loss of time, the bargain for a three or four years' lease was completed, and we moved in as soon as we could get our effects together. The next thing was to hire a servant, which was effectuated through the medium of the police, who even then in Germany had to poke their noses into everything.

It was characteristic of German thrift that the garden was portioned off into square lots about fifty by fifty, to be rented respectively to the different occupants of the Irmler flats. Each lot contained in addition to flower parterres, either a plum, a cherry or a pear tree. The rooms on the opposite side of the corridor, where the kitchen was situated, overlooked the court where the drill of the fire brigade used to take place.

As soon as we were comfortably settled in our new abode Papa bade us farewell and returned to work in England, and my poor little mother was left to fight the battle of life alone in a foreign land, with a German servant and no German speech at her command. Rosie and I could not be of much assistance to her at first, for with shame I have to confess that our four years' instruction from Doctor Blanke, in Cheltenham, availed us but little. Domenico was the only one at that time who, with his "kitchen German," as Doctor Blanke had contemptuously styled it, could utter a glib sentence. It is remarkable, however, how quickly we learned to speak! I never knew how it came about that it seemed as natural to me to speak German as English!

After Papa had gone, Mamma one day, in solemn mood, called us together and spake:

"Children, I want to impress on you that you are

ELIZA LINDLEY BARNETT AT SEVENTY-FIVE
MOTHER OF THE AUTHOR

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here to study music, and for no other purpose. The sacrifices that your father and I are making to give you this opportunity are so great that I demand from you some sacrifice in return. I want you to promise me to forego willingly all and any social gatherings to which you may be invited, or anything that might distract you, keep you up late at night, or in any way unfit you for your daily studies. I want you to feel all the time that you must render account of your steady progress to your father. This cannot be done unless you make up your minds to work hard and seriously. Will you promise?"

Of course we promised, and we kept our word, for during the whole of our stay in Leipzig we went nowhere with the exception of attending the musical functions prescribed by the Conservatorium as part of our musical education. Of course, we could not work incessantly, but when we played we played at music. The young find a way, somehow, to extract joy from everything! We made our own excitements, and we got as much pleasure out of life in one way or another as do our young people of to-day who wear fashionable clothes, go to dances and give pink luncheons.

Dear old Plaidy! He was so human and so kindly! When we were still strangers in Leipzig he used every now and then — on Sundays — to invite the entire Barnett family to go off on a sort of country picnic with him, which consisted in a walk over green pastures to a "milk-garden" where we landed as hungry as hunters, quite ready to appease our appetites with chunks of coarse rye bread, a dab of butter and slices of raw smoked ham, with glasses of milk, beer, or lemonade.

All of us were included in the invitation, not except-ing the twins, who, however, were not old enough to walk so far. On receiving the first of these invitations we wondered somewhat at the generous hospitality of Plaidy, who really had nothing about him to suggest doing things *en prince*. But when, after we had satisfied our hunger, a waiter came round to collect from each one individually his pay for what had been ordered, we were reminded that we had heard somewhere of such a thing as a "Dutch treat" which at the time had meant nothing to us. Now, thanks to Plaidy, here was an object lesson. On the whole, this simple, unostentatious way of making up pleasure parties, though foreign to our ideas, commended itself to us as making it easy for everybody and eliminating all sense of obligation.

Plaidy lived all alone with his aged mother, whose pride in him was something touching! She always spoke of him as "Herr Louis," feeling that she would be failing in proper respect to so important a person in calling him plain Louis.

Once at Christmas time we went to Plaidy's home to carry him a Christmas gift. He was out, and we found his little old crumpled mother sitting at a table, decorating with tinselled nuts a toy Christmas tree, fashioned out of wood, painted green, with fringes of green tissue paper for foliage. She might have stepped out of the frame of one of Denner's pictures, so seamed with crisscross wrinkles was her face. She told us that having noticed that Herr Louis seemed depressed that morning she had gone to the marketplace to get a tree to cheer him up. This scene of an adoring mother to whom her exalted son was after all still but a child to be diverted by a toy tree keeps returning to me as a sweet picture of touching simplicity which almost brings tears to my eyes.

After our ménage was in good working order, my mother's heart went out to some of the young people who, less fortunate than ourselves, were deprived of any taste of home life. Our cousin John had described to us the way they lived, — a sparsely furnished spare room in some flat being the order of the day, with ill-cooked food at cheap restaurants for their daily fare. Mamma felt it was for her to do what she could to make life a little more cheerful for at least our compatriots who would feel the absence of home comforts more acutely than some others. But how to do this without disturbing our studies? That was the question! She answered it by asking, to begin with, eight or ten of our chosen friends to supper every Sunday evening, but with the understanding that our orgies were never to be kept up later than half-past nine or ten. The long table in our dining room was profusely spread with all the things most dear to the hungry student, and the voracious appetites of our guests amply rewarded Mamma for her generous hospitality.

When supper was over we all adjourned to the music room and as music was the one absorbing theme for us all, we made music of our own amongst ourselves quite naturally and as a matter of course. We played snatches from the pieces we were studying, comparing the way Moscheles played octaves with the stiff wrist, to Plaidy's loose-wrist method and recalling our favorite themes and passages from the symphonies and overtures we had heard last at the Gewandhaus rehearsals. In doing this we crowded and pushed each other away from the piano in our eagerness to play the theme that possessed our memory for the moment. We were all good comrades with a common interest, and my mother had surely no reason to fear that our Sunday gathering would distract us from our music. On the contrary, the enthusiasm of one made a stimulus to another, and we found ourselves vying with each other as to how much each could recall of what we had heard, and how keen was our appreciation of certain harmonies. If any one of our number had composed a piece, he played it for our judgment, which was quite sure to be honest, never leaning toward flattery. If it was a song, Rosamond sang it, for she had now, on reaching her sixteenth year, developed a charming mezzo-contralto voice which was being cultivated by Professor Goetze. As she read everything at sight, without hesitation, she became a very popular interpreter of their songs, but she was often called upon to sing other things beside, a favorite bit out of a Schumann cantata or something from Bach's Passion Music, for instance.

The early habitués of our Sunday evening gatherings were Carl Rosa, Franklin Taylor, Pecher, Paul David — son of Ferdinand, Julius Stockhausen, son or nephew of the famous baritone, two English girls, Emily Matthews and a Miss Brooks, our cousin John Francis Barnett and John Sabastian Bach Mills — the lad who so overwhelmed us by playing Bach's fugues from memory in Cheltenham. He had preceded us to Leipzig and stood already in high repute at the Conservatorium as a pianist. He was the delight of Plaidy's heart as the perfect and brilliant exponent of his technical method, and when, later on, Mills fell madly in love with a beautiful English girl — a Miss Young — who was in Leipzig with her mother and sister, Plaidy was in despair! That anything should intervene to interrupt the brilliant career that he had chalked out for Mills in Germany was an unbearable grief to him! He did all he could to separate the lovers, appealing to my mother to help, when he found that Mrs. Young's efforts and those of her sister did not avail with the dark-eyed beauty. It was all in vain, however, for in the long run the lovers had their way and ended by getting off to America together in spite of an intrigue to which Plaidy in his desperation had recourse to stop the proceedings. Mills settled in New York with his wife, where he stood very high as a pianist and teacher and, let us hope, was happy ever after!

CHAPTER III

LOUIS PLAIDY — CLASSROOMS — EXAMINATIONS — PUBLIC TEST — STUDENTS' CONCERTS — ANIMUS OF THE STUDENTS — IGNAZ MOSCHELES — HIS PERSONALITY — HIS MANNERISMS — OUR TRICKS — HIS REVERENCE FOR BEETHOVEN — MASTERLY ILLUSTRATIONS — OUR SUBTERFUGES — CAUGHT IN MY OWN TRAP — INFERENCES — PLAIDY'S STRATAGEM — VIEWPOINT OF MOSCHELES — TARDY APPRECIATION

OUR piano courses at the Conservatorium began with technical studies in the classroom of Louis Plaidy, a dumpy, good-natured little man with a round, beardless face, seamed with vanishing scars, — the aftermath, perhaps, of small pox, which lent a leaden hue to his complexion. His face seemed quite incapable of any expression save one of kindly complaisance.

The classroom was square, with bare plastered walls and bare floor, a tall white porcelain stove in one corner, a piano and a few common wooden chairs being the only furniture. This was a fair sample of all the rooms in the building, with the exception of the Abendunterhaltung Hall — so called. That room was three or four times as large as the others, and there was a raised platform at one end, but in other respects it was of the same pattern as the ordinary classrooms. It was on the platform of this hall that we took our lessons of Moscheles, also our ensemble lessons with Ferdinand

David, Grützmacker, and sometimes Rietz, for we had the privilege of playing our Beethoven Sonatas and Trios or whatever other ensemble pieces we had prepared with these great artists instead of being at the mercy of the callow violin and 'cello players among the students. The orchestra lessons and chorus practice also took place there.

This little hall was likewise the scene of our half yearly examinations. On these occasions the Directors and all the members of the Faculty were present, seated at a huge oblong table at one corner of the auditorium near a window. On the table were piled up all the books containing the harmony exercises, the chorals with contrapuntal accompaniment, the canons and fugues perpetrated by the various students during the term; also such compositions as were considered representative, — these being, of course, confined to the male sex. While Hauptmann and Rietz were examining these products, the students one by one, in their turn, mounted the platform to play the piece or sing the song prepared for the occasion. It was a very dreadful ordeal for the timid and self-conscious to be judged by such a jury of great masters! Their respective trainers — Plaidy, Wensel, Papperitz and others — also had their bad quarter of an hour! During examination week there were two sessions daily which continued till all the students had been tried out and marked according to their merit. Every one was required to be present during this prolonged function, and in this way we became thoroughly acquainted with the relative talent and musical status of each other.

There was, likewise, once a year a grand performance in the Gewandhaus Concert Hall, which was called Die Oeffendliche Prüfung, a public test, — something corresponding to the commencement exercises in our own Conservatories of Music. Only the most distinguished among the Seniors about to graduate had the honour of holding forth on these memorable occasions, for were they not to be the samples of the finished product offered to the public by the Directors and Faculty of the Conservatorium? It was therefore with baited breath that the students whispered among themselves as soon as the selections were made known: "Fraülein this or Herr that is to play at the Oeffendliche Prüfung!" From that moment an added respect was plainly visible in the bearing toward the favoured ones.

Those occasions were truly very impressive, each performer being like unto a newly built ship launched into the vast and turbulent waters of public favour or perhaps of merciless detraction.

The weekly evening entertainments took place every Friday. These were conducted in a very informal manner, strongly in contrast with the up-to-date way of doing things in our American Conservatories.

Picture to yourself the sizable room, already described, furnished with wooden benches seating about a hundred, two pianos, sometimes three on the platform and near the door a tall, white porcelain stove. Our Director, Doctor Schleinitz, and all of the Faculty were required to be present, as were also all of the students. Nor did any seek to shirk attendance on these occasions, for the Abendunterhaltung was the great event of the week. The interest of all was centered in music; indeed there was little else to engage our attention apart from it! There were no outside activities, no other entertainments of a sort that would attract the student, no social life either in or out of the institution, except, perhaps, an occasional stolen walk in the Rosenthal taken by a congenial couple or group of students. The whole atmosphere was music, music, and music! Music was for us the keynote of life; everything revolved around it, or rather everything formed a counterpoint to that theme.

We had no printed programmes. The titles of all the pieces that had been prepared by the various students were duly entered in a book, with the names of the performers attached; the book was handed to Doctor Schleinitz on his arrival at the hall, and after scanning the list he made up his mind which one of the candidates he would call upon to perform. Meanwhile, all the listed students, anxiously awaiting their turn, sat fidgeting in their seats, rubbing their hands to keep up the circulation, and exercising their fingers on imaginary scales and arpeggios on the surface of the printed sheets of music in their laps.

This was the way of it: after the pupil-audience was assembled in the body of the hall, Doctor Schleinitz, Moscheles and all the other members of the Faculty seated themselves on the front row just below the platform. Before each number, Schleinitz rose, book in hand, announcing that Fraülein B—— would play, say, the Sonata Appassionata of Beethoven. There was then a stirring in the ranks, heads turned to survey sympathetically the moral condition of the chosen performer; sometimes a whispered "*aben Sie angst?*" (are you nervous?) as she extricated herself from her seat and walked up the broad aisle, preparatory to taking her place at the piano. Then there was a rubbing of stiff fingers, a wiping of hands perspiring from agitation, a hasty dabbing of a crumpled handkerchief on the desk, and the thing *ging los*.

At the end of the performance, Schleinitz or Moscheles, perhaps both, if particularly pleased, would shake hands with the favoured one before calling on the next victim. But this was a special honour, much treasured by us, and invariably eliciting a shower of "*Ich gratulire's*" from fellow students at the end of the concert, often hearty, occasionally perfunctory.

No one who has not experienced student days in an institution of this sort can understand the acute emotions felt on such occasions by aspiring and sensitive natures and how the faces of our fellow students contain for us either a world of joy or of sickening disappointment when the praise is lukewarm.

It was not until after a good dose of finger exercises and technical studies in general from Plaidy during the first few months of Conservatorium life that we began our lessons with Moscheles. I was possessed by a certain awe when I first entered his class, which, however, quickly disappeared under his kindly manner and perhaps somewhat also on observing the absence of awe felt by the other members of the class.

In appearance, Moscheles was a fine type of a dignified elderly gentleman. He was of a good height, not too heavy weight for his size, with a slight stoop. His features were strongly marked. His eyes were dark, his hair silvery white, his complexion florid, his nose a strong aquiline. His smile would have been pleasant but for a projection of the lower jaw over the upper teeth, which gave his mouth a set expression as of determination rather than of the friendly feeling and gentleness that characterized him. His general bearing was both courtly and kindly. In his movements he was remarkably slow and deliberate, and he had queer little mannerisms, such as pouncing on a finger improperly placed and trapping it with his hand, as if he had caught a fly, while he looked unutterables into the face of the culprit to awaken a poignant consciousness and due mortification at being caught *in delictu.*

He likewise had an intense dislike to the custom of wearing rings. Each time he perceived a ring on the finger of a pupil, no matter how repeatedly it occurred, he seized the finger and slowly removed the ring from it, delivering meanwhile an impressive lecture on the hindrance to the free action of the finger caused by the senseless habit of encompassing it with an inflexible band. This so oft repeated exordium excited the secret mirth of the class, certain members of which used from time to time to borrow all the rings they could collect to wear in the lesson with the mischievous purpose of laughing in their sleeves at the long-drawn-out struggles of the dear old Professor to peel off the rings from the loaded fingers while he acridly held forth as usual on the folly of wearing them.

I often used to wonder how much of our by-play Moscheles took in? He certainly never showed any consciousness of conspiracy on our part to play tricks on him or make fun of his mannerisms. These mannerisms were all of so marked and so stereotyped a description that one could hardly expect a bunch of lively young girls — in whom reverence is not apt to be a distinguishing feature — to pass them over without comment or penalty!

Amongst other notable habits, he had a way of slowly revolving in his chair by the piano and taking a deliberate survey of the class, which numbered six for a two-hours' lesson, if I remember rightly. The pupils were ranged around him, each with her music in her lap, the title turned toward Moscheles so as to catch his eye. After carefully considering these before inviting any one to play he proceeded to make his choice, — which depended largely on his interest in the composition; somewhat also on his interest in the pupil, but not at all on the fact that there were in the class several perhaps who had not been invited to play at all for weeks!

This was owing to the length of his lessons, for instead of apportioning the time equitably between the class members, he allowed himself to be carried away by his own enthusiasm and often kept one of us at the piano for a whole hour.

A sonata of Beethoven always appealed to him. His relish was obvious in showing us his interpretation of works that he not only loved *per se* but which were identified with his own brilliant career as a pianist. His reverence for Beethoven was one of the most deep-rooted of his feelings! I can never forget his playing of the "Pathétique," "The Moonlight," the "Appassionata," "Les Adieux," and the "Waldstein" Sonatas, samples of which he frequently gave us in the lesson. There was the true Beethoven spirit in all its rugged grandeur, — a something which one seldom if ever finds in the interpretations of our pianists to-day, who but too often use certain movements only as a peg on which to hang their brilliant technique. I have to own, however, that when the name of Ignaz Moscheles was conspicuous on the title page of a sheet of music reposing on a lap, he could never resist the temptation to call on that particular girl to play, provided she was musical enough to satisfy his demands. She would even take precedence of one with a Beethoven Sonata! This amiable weakness of his for his own compositions led to our playing more tricks on him. Before the lesson, one or the other of the class, anxious to have a chance to play, would take from Klemn's Musical Library, to which we all subscribed, a piece by Moscheles, — anything, no matter what; as its destination was merely a "camouflage" which even in those early and peaceful days was not unknown to us though we had no such compact word to express it.

On one occasion he revolved in his chair in the slow, deliberate fashion that was his wont, and catching sight of "Rondo in E Major, for four hands, by Ignaz Moscheles" on my lap, said with his most engaging smile, "Fraülein Barnett, will you play a little?"

Whereupon I rose, placing on the Piano the "Moonlight Sonata," which was secreted underneath the Moscheles Rondo. His face fell visibly, and I, answering his chagrined expression, explained, "I have only just got your Rondo from Klemn's to practise and have not yet had a chance to look it over, so if you will allow me, I should like you to give me a lesson on the Beethoven Sonata to-day."

Of course, fairly caught in my trap, he had no choice but to hear me play the Sonata. After we had gone through the first movement, he said cheerily, "Now let us try the Rondo."

"But, Herr Moscheles, I cannot play it, I only got it a half hour ago; I have not even looked at it!"

"No matter, we will try it together, — you can read it at sight."

Here was I caught in my own trap with a vengeance! So we sat down, he at the bass, I at the treble. It was not difficult to read, and somehow it went with so much snap and vim that he quite beamed with delight, turning to the class at the end to mark their inevitable admiration.

"We will play it together at the Abendunterhaltung this evening," quoth he with his most gracious smile.

"Oh, but Herr Professor, I surely ought to practise it a little to make sure of it before attempting it in public?"

"*Nein, nein, es geht schon ganz vortrefflich*" (it goes excellently already).

Of course there was nothing to do but to submit! So we played it. But somehow the Rondo did not go with the same snap at second sight as it did at first. I thought it fell a bit flat, and I rather suspected that Moscheles himself felt some qualms of regret at his eagerness to precipitate the performance.

I have often noticed that when called upon to either play or sing something on the spur of the moment, without any preparation, there was present in the rendering a spontaneity of expression, a true ring, a vitality, which was apt to decrease on every subsequent repetition. This became so apparent to me that in later years, when I was on the operatic stage, it was a sort of superstition of mine that if I studied my rôles audibly I should lose that first freshness, that vital impulse which furnishes the "magnetic thrill" to an audience; that, in other words, I could never be at my best! Accordingly I acquired the habit of studying all my operatic rôles without singing them, but instead, book in hand, mentally absorbing both text and music, thus picturing an ideal interpretation and execution unhindered by vocal lapses. I never attempted to account for this phenomenon until I had practically come to the end of my operatic career, at which time I first began to consider deeply the reason why of things, and to write my interpretation of the psychological aspect of singing as an emotional expression. Curiously enough, a short time ago, on reading Thorley's life of Paul Verlaine, I came upon the following passage: "What has become fixed can be learnt by rote and reproduced without the proper urgency of impulse that went to its first begetting. . . . As soon as a type is finally achieved the spirit that should inform it is apt to fly."

That contains the kernel of the thing if you can crack the nut, and I give these brief reflections for the benefit of any young students who may be puzzled as I was.

Our technical coach, Plaidy, though by no means imaginative or subtle in any way, had worked out perfectly the best method of dealing with Moscheles' little weaknesses. Once, after studying with Plaidy the E Flat Polonaise of Chopin to his satisfaction so that he wished me to play it at the Abendunterhaltung, he said to me, "Now, let it lie by awhile, and we will study in the meantime the G Minor Concerto of Moscheles. When you are ready to take it to his class, say that you would like to play it some time at the Abendunterhaltung when you are quite sure of being able to do it justice. That will put him in a good humour! Then ask him to hear you play the Chopin Polonaise which Herr Plaidy wishes you to play at the concert."

This innocent little "ruse" proved quite successful. Moscheles was very good-natured about it, actually admitting that the Polonaise was really a very effective piece! So he put his seal of approval on it, and it was duly entered in the book among the programme numbers. As it happened, I was called on to play it forthwith.

It was not that Moscheles failed to perceive any beauty or musical merit in the compositions of Chopin and also of Schumann that he was intolerant of them. True musician that he was, he did not fail to recognize the genius of Schumann for whom in earlier days he had acquired not only a deep respect, but also a personal regard, but he did not approve his music as subjects for study. It was too wild — too intricate. I suspect, however, that the chief grudge he bore it was that it did not call for the particular legato quality of the Cramer, Clementi, Field and Hummel school which had always been Moscheles' specialty! His clinging fingers did not lend themselves to the detached, capricious phrases, nor could he enter sympathetically into its fanciful eccentricities. While he regarded the bold themes and their original treatment as a new and interesting musical expression, yet it was not music of his world!

His objection to Chopin's music was that it was showy; too airily capricious and too sentimental; and while he granted him grace and originality, he disliked above all what he designated "his forced and artificial modulations." His conservative fingers knew naught of flying over the keys; they could only run. A deeper reason, or the psychology of it, was that it was impossible for him to *imagine* himself playing it. It would be far easier for us to-day to picture ourselves flying about in the air like birds than it was for Moscheles to picture himself playing either Chopin or Liszt!

As for Liszt's piano compositions, they were, from his point of view, simply meretricious vehicles for a vulgar display of pyrotechnics to be avoided by any true artist! As for the perverted taste of the public who craved this constant display to the exclusion of poetic expression and delicate "nuances," he sorrowed deeply in his heart over it!

It was because of the ever-growing demand on the part of the public for startling effects and the obvious deflection from the staple virtues of classic music that Moscheles was content, before his powers had deserted him, to withdraw from the public and settle down in Leipzig as teacher in the Conservatorium. Here in this classic atmosphere, pervaded by the spirit of Mendelssohn, he could not only indulge his own musical passion, but he could put up a brave fight for his time-honoured musical convictions, and do his best to restrain the impetuous tendencies of the rising generation, who were, as he saw it, going astray and worshipping false gods. He was a faithful representative of the Mosaic laws in music. A new dispensation was not for him!

All honour to him for his faithfulness to his honest beliefs!

I think it was a source of disappointment to Moscheles that so little eagerness was shown to play his compositions. He felt that his works were worthy expressions of his time and should take their place in the musical world with the Classics. We were frequently thus admonished by him:

"Why do you spend your time in studying this meretricious modern stuff? You should confine yourselves to Bach, Haendel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Me."

Nevertheless, despite his efforts to lead us in the straight and narrow path, we followed our own impulses. When we played a piece by Moscheles it was rather as a concession, as a compliment to him, than from a desire to add it to our permanent repertoire. Exception was made, however, of his really fine "Characteristische Etuden," admirable products of a master of his Art. His G Minor Concerto also was willingly accepted, as was his "Hommage a Haendel" for two pianos.

Hardly any advanced pupil left the Conservatorium without having played these last some time at the Abendunterhaltung. When any of us played his G Minor Concerto, Moscheles generally honoured us by playing the Orchestral accompaniments himself on a second piano.

At the time of which I am writing, however, we took no pains to interpret Moscheles' state of mind, or how it came to be, as I have attempted to do above. We simply regarded him as an interesting relic of a bygone musical period which we, of the rising generation, had bravely outgrown. Not that we did not appreciate the fact that his classic traditions, received at first hand, were of value to us, though rather as points of departure than as permanent abiding places, or, to put it another way, what we learned of him was to us like unto the good, strong underpinning of an old edifice, not to be destroyed, but used for the superior construction of a modern building. Accordingly, while we humoured his little weaknesses, we did not reverently sit at his feet and worship. We were, however, in some degree conscious that it was after all something of an honour and a privilege to be the pupils of a master so celebrated in the musical world. Perhaps, if we had been reminded that we were in his person vicariously touching elbows with such great ones as Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin, Weber, Spohr, Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Spontini, Cherubini, Heine, Walter Scott, George Sand, Coleridge, Thomas Moore, Paganini, Vieuxtemps, De Beriot and Joachim, — of Malibran, Sontag, Jenny Lind, Schroeder-Devrient, Viardot Garcia, and a host of other famous artists — all his associates of the past — we might have been more deeply impressed. But Moscheles was not one to boast of his privileges. He never alluded to the honours received at the court of Louis Philippe and William IV, and such things, so we simply saw him as he was without the halo of his wonderful experiences.

In later years, however, I grew to appreciate very deeply the musical enlightenment received from Moscheles, and to realize that while what he taught was basic, it also was a great deal more. My appreciation of the veiled beauties in Bach's music I owe largely to his interpretations. He treated the Fugues vocally and never in the dry mechanical way that one but too often hears them from contemporary performers. It is incomprehensible to me that these see no more in Bach than they do! That under their hands those noble conceptions should savor chiefly of contrapuntal stunts! If the emotional values which abound in Bach's music are now as an open book to me, I owe my grateful thanks to Moscheles; and many years later, in singing Bach's cantatas with Otto Dresel, a most rare and reverential interpreter of Bach of a more recent date, I experienced a delight and an uplift which never could have been mine but for those first impressions received from Moscheles in my youth. I also recall vividly Moscheles playing the Mozart Fantasia and Sonata in C Minor, and the rondo in A Minor. He instilled into these classics a fire and colour which seems to have died out since the time when such music voiced the feeling and emotions of the day.

CHAPTER IV

TRADITIONS OF THE FACULTY — TREND OF THE NEW GENERATION — LETTERS TO OUR FATHER — DISTINGUISHED VISITORS — SCHROEDER-DEVRIENT — VIARDOT GARCIA — GEWANDHAUS REHEARSALS — REPERTOIRE — JULIUS RIETZ — FERDINAND DAVID AS LEADER — CONCERT PERFORMERS — THE "SMALL HALL" — QUARTETTE CONCERTS — BACH'S PASSION MUSIC — FELLOW-STUDENTS

BETWEEN the years of 1857 and 1860, when we were in Leipzig, the spirit of Mendelssohn pervaded the Conservatorium much in the same way that the spirit of Wagner pervaded Bayreuth during the first decade after his death, — the Conservatorium having been founded by Mendelssohn in 1847, only ten years previously to our coming. — It has been agreed that the institution was then at the zenith of its glory. The classic traditions had been developed to their highest point, and modern innovations had not yet a disturbing influence. But in spite of the strictly classical cult that prevailed under the leadership of Schleinitz, Moscheles, David and Rietz, there were those among us who felt the more modern musical sap rising within us which refused absolutely to be kept down. We felt that it was for us, the rising generation, to be marching with the times; the thought of remaining in a musical rut was abhorrent to us.

We were well aware that at the Abendunterhaltungen any one whose name was listed to play — let us say — the D Minor or C Minor Trio by Mendelssohn or one of his concertos would be called on in preference to some one who was prepared with a Schumann sonata or a Chopin concerto, but that did not deter us from studying the works of these questionable composers and taking our chances of being called on to play. As it happened not infrequently that there were not enough pieces by the elect — Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Mozart, and Moscheles — to make up an entire programme, Schumann and Chopin on such occasions had their innings. Accordingly, we of the eclectic faction did not fare badly in the long run. Individually certainly we did not lack opportunities to distinguish ourselves, for there was rarely an Abendunterhaltung in which one or the other of the four Barnetts was not called up to play.

As we always had to write Papa after playing at the Abendunterhaltung, we agreed among us that when I played, Rosamond should write, when Rosamond played, I should write, when Domenico played, Rosamond and I were to take turns in writing. This was, of course, because we could speak in more glowing terms of each other than we could of ourselves. We knew that Papa was hungry for news of our successful appearances, and to gratify him we used to lay the praise on thick! It became, however, after the first enthusiasm began to die out, terribly irksome to write these letters. We could not find enough superlatives to vary our descriptions, and sometimes we were so tired of it that we summed up the whole account with "Domenico played capitally," or "Rosie did remarkably well." On such occasions we generally received from Papa a letter in a discouraged tone with the comment "the word 'capitally' is an expression of perfunctory praise, which conveys to me the impression that your brother made a failure of it." Such letters used sometimes almost to take the heart out of us, and what perhaps was worse, they induced in us a tendency to exaggerate each other's achievements. There could be no such thing for us as expressing an honest opinion of a performance unless it happened to be a really brilliant one, so great was our dread of disappointing Papa.

When it happened that either Moscheles or Schleinitz were entertaining some of the distinguished artists who came to perform at the Gewandhaus concerts, they often brought them to the Abendunterhaltung. On such occasions we were very proud to be called on to play, as it was tacitly understood that only the best pupils would be selected to hold forth.

When Clara Schumann, Viardot Garcia, Alfred Jaell, Mme. Stockhausen, Schroeder-Devrient, or other celebrities shook hands and complimented us, oh, those were blissful moments that compensated for all our heart-sinkings! On such memories our *amour propre* subsisted for many a day! I remember how big I felt when, after playing the first movement of the F Minor Concerto of Chopin, both Alfred Jaell and Jadassohn, who were present, complimented me on my performance, and next day Jadassohn sent me an orchestral score of the concerto which he himself had made, with a nice letter. Here was a good chance for Rosamond to write Papa without overstraining her verbal resources!

Jadassohn was at that time not yet a member of the Faculty, but his fame as a rare musician and particularly as a contrapuntist and writer of canons, caused him to come under the head of a "distinguished stranger" when he appeared at the Abendunterhaltung.

On some rare occasions some of the great artists who were in Leipzig for a short period graciously consented to come to the Conservatorium during the morning or afternoon to sing or play to the students. The most lasting impressions of these that remain with me I received from Schroeder-Devrient, a singer of past history who was in her prime in Beethoven's time, and who had become famous as the greatest of Leonoras in "Fidelio." She was an old woman when she came to Leipzig, but while her voice had lost its charm, her power of expression, her phrasing and the deep significance she imparted to the poetry were something I have never heard equalled. I can never forget the intense passion she instilled into Schumann's "Ich grolle nicht." And as for her interpretation of some of Schubert's Miller *lieder* and Schumann's "Frauenliebe und Leben," it was a revelation! Her power of infusing the dramatic element into the lyrical was something unique! The vivid memory of it served me as an exemplar during my whole career as a singer of songs in later days. We had the good fortune to hear her also at one of the quartet concerts, in the Gewandhaus Hall. It was there she sang the Schumann Cycle and a number of Schubert's songs. Her "Swan Song" this, for she died soon after. That was in 1860, just as we were graduating!

I also recall the surprise that Viardot Garcia gave us. She set aside a morning for the students at the Conservatorium, as we thought to sing for us, for she was at that time filling a *Gastrolle* at the Leipzig Opera House as Fides in Meyerbeer's "Prophete." But instead, what did she do but play a trio of Beethoven with David and Grützmacher! And what is more, her playing of it, when compared to that of any of the best musicians of the day, was second to none! She sang to us afterwards. Her voice was not beautiful; it had not in itself the charm and insinuating quality that some far less celebrated singers possess, but her control over it, her execution, her dramatic fervor, were marvellous! She was also a musician through and through and one felt it in all she did.

One of the great privileges we enjoyed as Conservatory students was free admission to the orchestral rehearsals of the Gewandhaus concerts. Our regular attendance was not simply permitted; it was enjoined as an important part in our musical education.

The whole of the broad gallery opposite the orchestra was put at our disposal, and there we all unfailingly congregated, — our own little bunch of friends naturally rotating toward each other: particular affinities as near as possible, for was not half of our pleasure in glances of rapturous mutual appreciation of some unusual harmony or beautiful phrase, or an intelligent look of anticipation when we knew that a certain favorite passage was about to recur? These gatherings in the Gewandhaus gallery were the scenes of unlimited *Schwermen* and many a soul was drawn towards another in a musical affinity which sometimes ripened into something more.

There was, however, but little love-making, so called, except of the most innocent and platonic description. The preferences of the students for each other seemed to depend rather on admiration for the musical status than on any strong personal attraction, although that, of course, may have had its weight. Only a comparatively small number of youths paired off with affinities, and these, if I remember rightly, were mostly in our own particular set. All of the innocent courting which took place was manifest in offerings of chocolate creams and stiff little bunches of violets, such as were sold in season at the street corners. Two and a half *silber groschen* would purchase six of these, and the same sum was expended for a paper cornucopia of small chocolate creams. The admiring youth usually waited with his offering at the foot of the stairway till the favoured one arrived, and of course the onlookers did not fail to put two and two together!

All the music played by the Gewandhaus orchestra was strictly classical, for Rietz, the conductor, was as conservative in his taste as were Moscheles and David. He loathed everything that bordered on innovation: Wagner's music was to him as a red rag to a bull! But he had to get bravely over his prejudice when three years later he was appointed Conductor of the Royal Opera of Dresden by the King of Saxony, in 1860! He did not deprive us, however, of Schumann, whose symphonies were performed in due course, and certain compositions of Gade and of Max Bruch were also admitted as not containing any dangerous elements of musical anarchy.

A Symphony of his own in E Flat was also in the Gewandhaus repertoire. This was Rietz's one monumental work, his music, outside of his Symphony, being for the most part the work of an academician rather than of a poet. As a conductor, however, and as a musician he was a great master. He possessed in a preëminent degree that most essential quality in a conductor, — *authority*. He had in Ferdinand David a wonderful coadjutor, whose leadership in the concerts was something more than mere leadership as we know it! It was a liberal education to all the violinists of the orchestra, for at rehearsal, when a passage did not sound as it should, and Rietz stopped the orchestra with a bang and a growl as was his wont, David would turn from his desk to show the men the better way of bowing, speaking to them in a suave tone which quite disarmed offence.

Rietz, on the other hand, could never control his irritability when the playing failed to come up to his standard. He spoke roughly, used bitter sarcasms, paying no heed to any one's feelings or susceptibilities. I remember when, at a rehearsal, something in the accompaniment of a soprano aria did not suit him, he banged stormily on the desk to stop the orchestra and turned roughly to the singer with a wrathful "Halt's Maul," which means, "Hold your jaw" or "Shut up." However, his rudeness was not seriously treasured up against him, for the men had been used to his peculiarities for ten years or more, and they must have realized in some fashion that any musical lapse had on Rietz's sensitive ear the effect of a sharp physical pain which compelled a vent of some violent character. Moreover, they knew that at heart he was a good sort!

In frequenting these rehearsals regularly during a period of three years and a half, we had the opportunity to hear not only the entire classic repertoire repeatedly but also most of the finest virtuosi of that day, among whom were Von Bülow, Clara Schumann, Otto Goldschmidt, Marmontell, Alfred Jaell, Ernest Pauer (who I remember played one of Hummel's concertos), Dreyschock, the celebrated octave and left-hand player, Brassin, Pruckner and Joachim, whose playing of the Beethoven Concerto and the chaconne of Bach left in my mind a lasting impression of breadth and depth that can never be surpassed! Then, in their turn, came Ferdinand Hiller, who had one of his compositions performed, Max Bruch, Henselt and Rubinstein.

It is a curious fact that I cannot recall the names of any of the singers we heard in Leipzig except Schroeder-Devrient, Viardot Garcia and Jenny Lind. There were others, but they cannot have made a deep impression on me. The coming of Jenny Lind was, of course, a great event for us. She sang the grand "scena" from "Der Freischütz." At the rehearsal we were palpitating with anticipation. But alas! Our high expectations were not fulfilled. Her voice had quite lost its freshness, and while it was not exactly thin, it was without colour. One felt also that she had to spare it — to use it carefully — which robbed her expression of spontaneity. There was no "thrill" in it — she left us cold! Yet it meant much to us only to have seen her, even though she was but as a shell without the kernel!

Only a few of the students attended the Gewandhaus concerts. As most of them were not overflush with money, they contented themselves with the rehearsals. Our parents, however, were so eager to give us every opportunity to hear good music that they let us subscribe to the concerts also. But these we found on the whole not nearly as satisfactory as the rehearsals, for the reason that we had to sit in a sort of anteroom which went by the name of "The Small Hall," and while this was actually an extension of the large hall and opposite the stage, the broad doorway leading from one to the other was always monopolized by males of the hog variety, who, regardless of the rights of those seated in the extension, entirely shut off our view of the stage, leaving the personalities of the solo performers wholly to our imagination! While there may have been some advantage in the auditory concentration thus induced, yet one lost many of the finer "nuances" of the orchestra which failed to filter through the massive frames and heavy garments of those selfish doorway usurpers. Had it not been for the rehearsals, we should never have had an idea of how any of the solo performers looked, and as for the audience which filled the little hall, who did not enjoy the students' privilege of attending the rehearsals, they, poor souls, never had a chance to see them! It was therefore a source of great dissatisfaction that the Gewandhaus auditorium proper was only large enough to accommodate the time-honoured subscribers to the concerts. We, the Barnett contingent, always occupied the front row of the little hall, right opposite the doorway, but as this position only afforded us a more intimate acquaintance with broadcloth, I do not think that the rest of the audience had any reason to envy us!

The Gewandhaus orchestra did not afford us our only musical feasts. There were also the String Quartet Concerts with David for first violin, Dreyschock for second and Grützmacher for 'cello. The name of the viola player has escaped me. These were the perfection of chamber concerts, and here again we were made familiar with all the best of the classic chamber music under the best of auspices. We heard Rubinstein play for the first time at one of these. He was quite a young man then.

But the most memorable of all the music we heard was Bach's Passion Music according to St. Matthew, which was given in its entirety every Good Friday in the Thomas Kirche. We attended both rehearsals and performances, and in this way became saturated with its monumental grandeur. That music transported me into another world little known to the young, — the world where pain and sorrow, pity and self-immolation were things of beauty. I do not recall the names of the singers; indeed, I doubt if I knew them at the time. They were the voices of the Passion; that was all that mattered!

Our fellow students were of various types. There were the buxom and frolicsome, the lank, lean and joyless, the taciturn and indifferent, the ambitious and forthputting, the earnest and enthusiastic, the serious and determined. There were always to be seen wandering about the long corridor and in and out of the room where organ pedals were attached to a superannuated piano for organ practice, certain long-haired, loose-jointed, sallow-faced, gloomy-looking youths, whose sole occupation seemed to be to trample music underfoot. They were the chief frequenters of the organ-pedal room; they never spoke to any one; they apparently had no interest in what was going on, and they were never known to "fetch a smile." We always referred derisively to these long-haired ones as "the Geniuses."

None of the girl students ever appeared to aim at making themselves attractive by means of dress. It was the accepted custom for every one to wear the simplest and most unpretending of clothes. Generally a plain merino, or serge dress, which was often, for economy's sake, cut low in the neck to serve the double purpose of day and evening wear. In the classrooms and at rehearsals a white cambric kerchief, crossed and fastened about the throat, was the rule; in the evening, at the Abendunterhaltung the kerchief was dispensed with, and bare shoulders permitted to be in evidence. There was no such pesky thing in those halcyon days as change of fashion! A perennial skirt and basquewaist served all purposes for all time. With the advent of Madeline Schiller, in the last half-year of our time at Liepzig, we were first introduced to fashionable clothes. It was she who provided us with our first glimmerings of "style." Tall and slender, with a willowy figure and graceful carriage, she was the embodiment of an aestheticism in raiment which had never yet dawned on our consciousness! Yes, it was Madeline, may God forgive her, who brought the fig leaf into Eden.

CHAPTER V

SUNDAY EVENING GUESTS — WALTER BACHE — ERNST RUDORFF — A SCHUMANN DEVOTEE — FRAU LIVIA FREGE — DISCOVERY OF SCHUMANN'S FRÜHLINGSNACHT — PAUL DAVID — JULIUS STOCKHAUSEN — CARL ROSA — EMIL KRAUSE — ALBERT PAYNE AND OTHER FRIENDS — FRANKLIN TAYLOR — JOHN S. DWIGHT — JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT

MY story would not be complete without some description of the congenial spirits who composed our little coterie, or at least some of them who have since made their mark in the world.

In addition to the ones already mentioned as frequenters and participators of our "Sunday evenings" there were new arrivals from England every season who naturally rotated toward us and were admitted to the joys of jam tarts and fruit pies, plus our musical reunions afterwards. The first to increase our number was Walter Bache from Birmingham who later became well known to fame in England as the earnest and persistent devotee and propagandist of the then music of the future, — Liszt and Wagner being the gods of his idolatry. He was a well-grown youth, blond, with smooth cheeks of a delicate pink and an obvious diffidence of manner which he himself seemed to be humourously conscious of. Curiously enough, when he was in Leipzig he was an enthusiastic lover of Italian music, an unpardonable defection, of course, from the Conservatorium *culte* which occasioned merciless teasing and a frank abuse, which he bore good-naturedly and without flinching. He had the strength to hold fast to his convictions, while they lasted, in spite of all the fun that was poked at him by the *enfants terribles* of our little group.

Bache had caught the spirit of Italian music from Liszt, then in Rome, who with his broadly artistic nature, alive to all that was true and spontaneous, recognized in it the legitimate expression of the Italian people. We liked Bache for his ardent belief in what he loved and his fearless avowal of it between the two swarms of rigid classicists and rampant Schumannites in the Conservatorium, and in spite of the gibes of so opinionated and so scornful a majority. When Arthur Sullivan a little later became one of our Sunday evenings habitués, he took a wicked delight in sitting at the piano and parodying a Rossini cavatina for Bache's special benefit. He did it so cleverly too that it was invariably greeted with roars of laughter from the rest of us.

Bache was not creative, but he was sensitive in a high degree to the qualities of music. I have often observed that an absence of creative power is apt to go hand in hand with an extraordinary power of appreciation and of sympathetic interest, if not of veneration for the works of others. Bache was particularly drawn to Rosamond, as in fact all diffident youths always were! He confided freely in her even his many grievances, such as an undesirable accumulation of hair oil and pomades which his barber persuaded him to buy and which he was too weak to refuse.

I do not recall how it came about that Ernst Rudorff became one of us, but I do remember that he was one of the most assiduous and devoted of our company. An ardent worshipper of Schumann, his enthusiasm was most infectious. He never appeared in our midst without some new gem that he had discovered, — either a piano piece which he played, or a song which Rosamond had to sing. We all raved together to his heart's content over his musical titbits.

Rudorff came to us from Berlin, where his father, Judge Rudorff, held a very high position. His parents were Hanoverian; he, however, answered fully to the accepted idea of the Prussian type. He was tall and broad-shouldered in proportion, with an erect carriage and military bearing which was strangely in contrast with his sensitive, artistic nature and exquisitely refined taste. His face was broad, his features not very marked, his thick crop of straight hair of a light brown and his cheeks of a deep red. His absolute genuineness and honest frankness gave a particular value to his enthusiasm which was quite irresistible. When he wanted anything he wanted it so much that we all had to give in to him, no matter how unwillingly!

For instance, he once took it into his head that Schumann's "Spanische Liederspiel" ought to be performed at the Abendunterhaltung and was keen to bring it about. The first step, of course, was to bring it to one of our Sunday evenings and get us to try it over. It called for four voices. Carl Rosa was pressed into the service as bass, Paul David as tenor, though neither of them was a singer, Rosamond as contralto — the only flawless element — and I was doomed to struggle with the soprano part. This was sheer cruelty, for my voice was only half formed, my high notes being quite uncertain and my middle notes without body. It was excruciatingly painful to me to be forced to sing, because

I was too musical not to appreciate acutely my own shortcomings! What made things worse, the soprano part of the duet and the quartet was fiendishly unvocal! Even with a well-developed soprano voice a singer would find it difficult to make any effect with the work. But this was all of no consequence to Rudorff, who trod my objections ruthlessly underfoot! When I pleaded that he should get one of Professor Goetze's pupils to sing the soprano part, his answer was, "There is no one who is musical enough; you are the only one who can do it."

At last, when I braced myself to say, "I really *must* refuse; I have no desire to sing it!" he turned on me most amiably and said, "Supply yourself with three pennyworth of desire!" Of course he had his way in the end!

Rudorff had the privilege of an intimate friendship with Frau Livia Frege, — a favorite singer in the past and greatly admired by Mendelssohn, who used to say, "Nobody can sing like her." It was in her house that Mendelssohn died. He had gone to try to coax her into singing in "Elijah" at the Gewandhaus, which she, having lost confidence in her voice, could not bring herself to do, and it was there that he was seized with his last illness.

After we had rehearsed the "Liederspiel" with Rudorff a few times he took us to Frau Frege, with her permission, to get some hints as to certain delicate "nuances." On entering her attractive and richly appointed salon she took us graciously and kindly by the hand and led us to the piano, where she pointed out to us the particular way in which she interpreted the leading phrases, — illustrating with her voice, to our great delight! This meeting with the great singer was quite an event for us, and the sound of her voice, with the intense expression she threw into it, still rings in my mind's ear as I write! Using Frau Frege's interest in his scheme as an argument in favour of giving the work at the Abendunterhaltung, Rudorff duly stormed the citadel of Schleinitz and fought till, as usual, he gained his point!

On one Sunday evening while we were making music after supper Rudorff suddenly burst into the room, his face all aglow, crying, "I've discovered such a wonderful song! Listen." Whereupon he plumped on to the music stool and played Schumann's "Frühlingsnacht." Of course it was quite new to us all, nor had we ever heard anything like it. We remained transfixed as we listened to the quiverings and rustlings of a spring night. It seemed almost as if the keys might have been touched by the feathers of birds, so lightly did his fingers fall on them. Then Rosamond sang it to his accompaniment to bursts of wild enthusiasm as she reached the last phrase, — "*Sie ist dein.*" We made her repeat it again and again, and on every subsequent Sunday for many weeks after she had to sing it at least once. It seems hard to realize to-day that there ever was a time when "Frühlingsnacht" could have come to us as a new revelation in music! However, when we reflect that a work of Wagner's which at that period hardly conveyed to us the idea of music at all, now, in the background of the ultra-modern school, greets us restfully almost as a classic, our wonder grows less!

Rudorff was not in the Conservatorium with a view of becoming an expert on any instrument, but rather to acquire a high degree of musicianship under Hauptman, Rietz, and later with Reinicke, when he came to Leipzig to take the place of Rietz on his departure for Dresden.

A few years after we parted at Leipzig, in 1860, Rudorff became Professor at the Cologne Conservatorium and later he took Joachim's place as Director of the Concerts in Berlin. He also was a notable composer, but the technical difficulty of his works has militated against their becoming widely known.

Paul David, son of Ferdinand, was one of the most accommodating of our Sunday habitués. There was nothing he was not ready to do, from a violin or viola part to the tenor voice in a quartet or duet. He fitted somehow into everything! As a violin player he had not inherited his father's genius, but he was a thoroughly musical creature, capable of reading anything and everything at sight. His voice was of a sort of nondescript character, limited in compass and power, but perhaps on that very account he was all the more useful to us as an asset, for he had no reputation as a singer to sustain! In 1862 Paul became leader of the orchestra at Carlsruhe.

Julius Stockhausen, our violoncellist-in-chief, was of a more gentle and refined type than the average student. He was very good-looking and graceful in manner and bearing, possessing nothing of the *enfant terrible* and being incapable of joining in the banter that was ordinarily indulged in by the rest of us.

Carl Rosa, who in after years became the husband of Parepa and was also both conductor and manager of an English opera company, was a strong blond, with the pinkest cheeks and the yellowest straight hair I ever saw. He had been a child-wonder and had made quite a career as boy violinist before he came to the Conservatorium, where he was rated not as a wonder, but simply as an excellent violinist and intelligent musician.

That Parepa's choice of a husband should have fallen on him was always a good deal of a joke to me when in after years I was a member of the Parepa-Rosa Opera Company, because of the contrasted massive structure and dark colouring of Parepa, who was compelled to look down upon him from her altitude. Parepa herself, who had a strong sense of humour, was fond of telling us how, after having made up her mind that she would never marry a man shorter than herself, that nothing would induce her to marry a blond, and that she would rather remain single all her life than marry a German, she had, by the irony of fate, married all three embodied in Rosa's person! Rosa's family lived in Hamburg, where his father was proprietor of a good hotel. He came, thus, although a German, under the head of a homeless youth in Leipzig, as did also Rudorff, Stockhausen, Emil Krause and one or two other Germans, my mother's heart not being set against other nationalities than British as recipients of her hospitality.

Emil Krause, who, poor fellow, was nearly blind, was a gentle, sentimental creature, — always a little in love. He had a genius for friendship and for admiration which rendered him acceptable in our midst! Not having any specialty, either as virtuoso or as composer, but aiming simply at becoming an all-round musician, he did not contribute much to our musical fund of enjoyment. But we all liked him and treated him much as we would have done a faithful dog, deriving satisfaction from the contemplation of his obvious happiness at being one of us.

Albert Payne, though English, was not on the homeless list. His father was head of an important music publishing house in Leipzig of which Albert himself later became the head. It was to him in fact that we were indebted for that charming little pocket edition of string quartets, which so many musical people have since enjoyed. He was inherently something of an aristocrat, and not infrequently one heard, when he was the subject of conversation, "Oh, Albert Payne; he's a swell!" Nevertheless, he liked to make himself at home in our little Bohemia.

He played the violin very well, but his real genius lay in whistling. His facility was truly something extraordinary! He was able to produce unsuspected sustained effects and variations in tone quality deemed impossible to the whistler. At one of our Sunday evenings he whistled a Spohr violin concerto to a pianoforte accompaniment. It must have been something more than ordinarily worth while of its kind to have found favour in our none too tolerant circle!

Emily Matthews was a nice, genuine girl without any very marked characteristics. She never took part in our music, but was a sympathetic and admiring looker-on and listener. A faithful student, she was of the kind who would return to England and settle down as an admirable teacher in some provincial town.

Annie Brooks was a little, round, quiet, mouselike person, of the sort who says nothing but "takes it all in!" Something that used to puzzle us greatly was the peculiar attraction she had for Ferdinand David, of whom she took private lessons in ensemble playing. Something in her nature which to us was a closed book must have appealed to him, for he and she used to take long walks together and spend much time in each other's company, — no breath of scandal ever being connected with their intimacy, however, as she was an impeccably respectable English girl under the protection of her good English mother, who was in Leipzig to chaperone her. I suppose that David, with his high-strung, nervous temperament, found the society of this simple, quiet girl restful to him. It must have been that!

The member of our "Clique" who kept us in order and gradually brought us to a proper sense of the artistic importance of our musical reunions was Franklin Taylor. He constituted himself a sort of organizer and put a check on our running musically wild, as we did in the beginning. He had one of those precise, orderly minds that keeps imagination at bay, — and in consequence he was preëminently executive and practical.

He insisted, as our acknowledged prestige grew, that we should have regular programmes. These he took upon himself to arrange and to print with his own hand in pen and ink, which he did in remarkably good style. Not content with that, as one who took no active musical part, he undertook to review our concerts.

The articles which he wrote were read by us the week following, and we actually began to dread his sharp criticisms, for he showed no one any mercy, since he had no "glass house" of his own! He was hard as steel and sharply cutting in his comments at times, which led the victims of his critical blade to retort with, "that's Sheffield!" — a malicious commentary on the cutlery establishment with which Taylor was supposed to be connected in Sheffield. Such ejaculations were well calculated to take the sting out of our critic's words, inasmuch as they implied that artistic sense and Sheffield cutlery were not homogeneous!

Somehow, perhaps through the talk of our friends at restaurants, either shared or overheard by outsiders, certain strangers to our circle and foreigners visiting

Leipzig got scent of the fact that there was some fun going on *bei uns* which led to their asking some of our number if they would introduce them? One of these was John S. Dwight, of Boston, whose musical journal was so popular with all musical people, and who was also at the head of the Harvard Musical Library Association. He came on several occasions, and many years after, when I myself came to live in Boston, he reminded me of those Sunday evenings in our music room, as did also Elliot Pratt, organist at St. Pauls' Church, Boston, who eventually became a neighbor of ours on Beacon Street. I, myself, could hardly recall their presence at our reunions, so little heed did we pay to distinguished strangers as such, though of course we always received them courteously and bade them welcome.

The much feared German critic, Bernsdorff, also honoured us with his presence occasionally, but we were at the time not greatly alive to the honour; we rather regarded it as a privilege we were conferring on him! We certainly had, among us, no small opinion of ourselves, and on the whole, as I look back, we, the Barnetts, had it altogether too much our own way in the Conservatorium! When it was said by the envious that the Barnetts "owned the Conservatorium," there was more than a grain of justice in the implication!

Pecher, the blue-eyed, smooth-faced, pink and white, yet manly and sturdy Pecher, was also one of us. By the way, Pecher was the first to play the E Flat Quartet of Schumann, which had never been heard before. It was at the Abendunterhaltung, and Clara Schumann was present and complimented him highly on his interpretation of it.

The last addition to our musical circle was Madeline

Schiller, who only arrived within six months of our graduation from the Conservatorium. She came bearing letters of introduction to Moscheles and Schleinitz, in which her unusual gifts were duly emphasized. When the news was first received of the advent of this *rara avis*, we were told that a group of students, some of them our personal friends, in response to a remark that "at last the Barnetts would have to come off their perch and share the honours," formed a ring, and joining hands, danced for joy. It was Emil Krause who gave us this pleasant information, naming the members of our set who were in the ring.

At first we were deeply hurt at what appeared to us as hideous disloyalty, although we dimly recognized in the act a modern echo of the Athenian who was "tired of hearing Aristides called the Just!" But our indignation was not of long duration; we accepted the situation with a fairly good grace and perhaps profited also by the lesson it taught us!

Madeline was promptly introduced and gladly admitted to our circle, with the result that she and I became the closest of friends. As the latest "Star" she might have queened it over us, but she did not. She was gentleness and amiability personified, which traits, added to an absence of self-assertion, or apparent consciousness of superiority, would have quite disarmed our jealousy, even had we been jealously inclined! She entered into the spirit of our Sunday evenings and took kindly to Mamma's jam tarts, which sealed her reputation among us as a "good fellow." Otherwise her popularity might have been endangered by a certain lackadaisical air, savouring at times almost of affectation.

Then there was Felix Moscheles, who, if I remember rightly, was not a student in the Conservatorium, and who, having a charming home in Leipzig with his parents, was really not a proper candidate for our hospitality! But he liked to come to hear our music on Sunday evenings, and as he was a right good fellow, we were glad to have him with us. His reputation as a painter in England needs no emphasizing. These, then, were the friends who composed our pleasant little Sunday evening gatherings!

Our cousin, John Francis Barnett, had not changed much since our meetings in Cheltenham. He was just the same self-centered being that he was then. If there was any change, it was rather in our appreciation of him. As we saw him side by side with other musicians, though he never failed to command our respect, the element of hero worship died out. While he was held in high esteem by the Faculty he had never won the hearts of his associates, who felt in him a certain cold aloofness. In the intimacy of our circle he was the victim of more or less quiet quizzing on account of a certain absent-minded manner which made him appear never to be interested, or even listening, when others were talking, but intent only on exercising his fingers on the table, or on the arm of his chair. Yet we discovered that his thoughts were not always of the exalted nature that the "far-off" expression of his face suggested, in fact, that he was not above considering the expediencies of prosaic things!

For instance, once when he was dining with us, after one of his long, absent gazings into space, when it seemed as if he might be trying to solve the mysteries of the Infinite, he said dreamily, "I have been considering whether it would be more expedient to eat the less tempting bits first, leaving the titbits till the last, or whether it would be safer to make sure of the titbits at the offset? You see, in leaving them to the last, should satiety ensue, the titbits would remain on one's plate untasted, while, in reversing the order, only the less tempting morsels would remain untouched."

John was not attracted by the fair sex, nor was he as a rule particularly attractive to them, although a decidedly good-looking youth. One could not possibly picture him as flirting! That would have been altogether beyond any flight of imagination! This description of him may suggest that he was simply a composite of intellect, fingers and a stomach! But that was far from being the case, as his subsequent career has shown.

When our half-yearly country parties took place it was customary for the young people to walk together in pairs through the Rosenthal to our objective *Milch Garten* and *Tanz Halle,* — each youth pairing off naturally with the girl of his preference. There were always those who had *no* preferences, and they paired off with the "left-overs." John was one of those who had no preferences, and it mattered not to him with whom he walked. He had, however, a certain sense of the fitness of things and was conscious that it was proper to attempt some conversation with his companion. They once happened to be in front of us, that is, of Sullivan and myself, and this is what we overheard after a long and embarrassing silence:

"I wonder that artificial irrigation is not more frequently resorted to in this country!"

The blank look of inquiry with which this query was received by his companion was evidently quite lost on my absent-minded cousin, but Sullivan, on whom nothing was ever lost, chuckled over this feat of light conversation for months after! He made a point of bringing up the subject of "artificial irrigation" apropos of nothing, on all occasions, accompanied with an interchange of knowing glances between us. But John apparently never "caught on" to our teasing, but continued to exercise his fingers and to gaze absently into space as though no one else was even present.

When we met again five years later, after our sojourn in Italy, it was at the Birmingham Festival, where his cantata, "The Ancient Mariner," was given for the first time. He had come down from the clouds with his feet safely on the ground and was thoroughly alive to all that was going on around him!

The account of the first coming of Arthur Sullivan among us, though I have spoken of him before, is reserved for the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

ARTHUR SULLIVAN — OUR FIRST MEETING — FIRST IMPRESSIONS — AN INSPIRED ATTEMPT AT COMPOSITION — A QUARTET FOR STRINGS — A CALLOW LOVE AFFAIR — ROSAMOND'S ILLNESS — A TEA PARTY — SELF-REPROACH

ONE morning, at the Gewandhaus rehearsal, Franklin Taylor brought us the news of a new arrival from London, Arthur Sullivan, who had been sent to the Conservatorium as "Mendelssohn Scholar" to finish his musical education. He added that Sullivan was armed with splendid letters of introduction to Moscheles and Schleinitz from Sterndale Bennett and Goss, both of whom highly commended his talent. He had come to Leipzig ostensibly to study the last word in counterpoint with Hauptman and composition with Rietz. I pricked up my ears at this, experiencing a certain excitement mixed with awe at the coming of this paragon, for a genius for composition always appealed to me more strongly than the highest degree of excellence in a performer on any instrument! My eager interest grew every moment, and I listened intently to all accounts of his achievements. We were told that he had written a quartet for strings among other things, a great thing to have accomplished before entering the Conservatorium! He must indeed be a genius! — So ran my thoughts.

I first caught sight of Sullivan at the morning session of our second midyear examination though he had been constantly in my thoughts since his coming had first been heralded. He had been invited by Schleinitz to attend the examination to sample the talents of his future confrères. Suddenly I heard Taylor, who sat behind Rosamond and me, exclaim, "There's Sullivan!" I turned and beheld, standing in the doorway, a smiling youth with an oval, olive-tinted face, dark eyes, a large generous mouth and a thick crop of dark curly hair, which overhung his low forehead. His whole attitude was so free and unconstrained one would have thought he had always been there! Although he actually knew no one he looked as if he found himself among old friends. The sight of him excited in me a strange emotion never before experienced! Something happened within me, I knew not what! When my turn came to play I had no thought of either Director or Faculty, but only what impression my playing would make on that dark-eyed, curly-headed youth! After the session was over he was introduced to us by Schleinitz as a compatriot with whom we ought to make friends. Rosamond and Domenico at once invited him to visit us and meet Mamma, their minds being made up that he would be a proper addition to our little circle and a legitimate partaker of our Sunday evening pies and jam tarts!

When he paid his respects to Mamma, which he did promptly, his ingratiating manners appealed to her at once, and she heartily agreed that he should be gathered in as a member of the *Barnettsche Clique*, as our coterie of chosen friends was called by those of our fellow students who were not in it. Sullivan's obvious appreciation of the quality of Mamma's hospitality and the gusto with which he attacked the good things on our supper table won Mamma's heart so completely that later he was the only one of our friends who was ever allowed to come on other evenings besides Sunday.

From the first Sullivan showed a distinct inclination to flirt with Rosamond, who, for her part, accepted his attentions in much the same spirit as she did those of several others who found her very attractive. But she was too much like Sullivan, both in appearance and in disposition, to be violently impressed by his personality, her preference always being for blond types like Walter Bache, or medium types like Albert Payne, and for diffident rather than bold assertive characters. So, there was Sullivan wasting his attentions on Rosamond, who accepted them carelessly while I would have given anything only to be noticed by him! It was acute agony to be regarded as only a child! My youth became my despair! What could I do about it? That was the great question which absorbed me.

I was determined to make myself felt somehow. Happy thought! I would distinguish myself in some extraordinary way! Sullivan's string quartet had brought him into notice; I too would write a string quartet! Sullivan's was in D Minor and in the vein of Mendelssohn, mine also should be in D Minor and in that same vein. So I started boldly in with a will, without knowing anything about the rules of classical form! This led me, however, to study the simple sonata form of Mozart with a new purpose. But there were more problems to solve than I had bargained for. How to tether my unbridled musical ideas to those conventional modes was a tough problem! I consulted cousin John as to the amount of license I might permit myself, here and there, and he encouraged me by telling me that I need not cramp myself by following any model too closely, that there was always a wide margin for individual expression.

How I must have plagued poor Johnny with my incessant questionings, such as, "Is such and such a chord easy for the violin, or does this passage go too high for the 'cello?" I was nothing more nor less than an ambulating note of interrogation! But cousin John was always very good-natured about it and took the trouble to explain things, so that really I got to understand both classical form and the possibilities of the different instruments. But it bothered me terribly to write the viola part in the tenor clef and my impatient spirit rebelled at having to do it!

At last, after a long struggle, the first movement was finished! With what pride I looked at the score after it was all neatly copied! And oh, what bliss when I saw Sullivan take it up and peer into it one evening as it lay on the piano.

"Who wrote this?" quoth he.

"I did; it is my Quartet," quoth I, snappishly, at the same time attempting to snatch it from him.

"Oh, no," laughed he, teasingly, "you can't have it now I've got it; I'm going to keep it till I've had a good look at it."

I now began to feel horrible misgivings lest he should find dreadful things in it, and to dread that quizzical smile of his!

After he had examined it attentively, he looked at me curiously from head to foot as if I was a new kind of creature that he had never seen before. "Well done, little girl!" he exclaimed heartily in his most captivating manner; and behold, I was the happiest and the most triumphant being in the creation at that moment! The whole of me was aglow with a great joy, though I would not have allowed him to suspect it for anything! My outward bearing was that of a snorty indifference!

That silent event marked an epoch in my life! From that momentous evening I ceased to be a nonentity. I felt that at last I stood for something in His eyes, even though I was only in my fourteenth year. Cousin John had praised my work when I showed him parts of it from time to time, but though his praise gave me increased assurance and encouragement, there was no "thrill" in it like unto that excited in me by those four little words of Sullivan's: "Well done, little girl!"

Can a child scarcely more than thirteen years of age be really in love, I wonder? What is this strange premonition of the "Grande Passion" in a perfectly innocent creature in whom sex consciousness has not been awakened? Here is another mystery which must still remain unfathomed!

About a week later Rosamond was taken ill. It was pronounced congestion of the lungs. There was fever, and our piano practice at home had to be stopped for the fortnight that she was confined to her bed. Our English friend, Mrs. Brooks, invited me to do my practising at her house. She also invited me to tea and to spend the evening; and Mamma, who saw that my spirits were affected by the atmosphere of sickness, allowed me to accept her invitation for that once. So I went to my first and only tea-party. Sullivan was there! An unexpected bliss, and there was no one for him to flirt with, for Annie Brooks did not count. His attention was practically forced on to me, and he accepted the situation with all the grace and charm that were a part of him. He talked quite seriously with me and drew from me a recital of my inmost aspirations. He had a happy manner of seeming to be intensely interested in the concerns of the person he was talking with which invited confidence.

From that time forward he was mine! I was no longer a child in his sight; he had recognized in me the potential woman!

When I came to tell Rosamond about the tea-party at the Brooks', with a heart full to overflowing, I was suddenly seized with a horribly guilty feeling, — a feeling that I had taken a base advantage of her illness in appropriating what, up to that time, had been hers! But she, for her part, seemed to think that there was nothing out of the common in my tale. It was all very nice, very natural, and she was glad I had had such a happy time!

It may be that her sympathy was awakened by my transparency as to how greatly I cared for what actually mattered little or nothing to her. In any case, it was easy to see that she was not jealous, and that was a great relief to me! I often smile to think how seriously I took myself in those days!

CHAPTER VII

RECREATIONS — COUNTRY PARTIES — SUMMER HOLIDAYS — THÜRINGEN — SAXON-SWITZERLAND — DRESDEN — AN UNPLEASANT ADVENTURE — A BLUNDERING ARREST — AN UGLY PREDICAMENT — GERMAN OFFICIALDOM — DELIGHTS OF SCHANDAU — AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR — A FIT OF JEALOUSY — SULLIVAN PLANS A SURPRISE — MY STRING QUARTET IS PLAYED — EXPLANATION — RECONCILIATION — SULLIVAN'S TRAITS — SUMMER AT KIEL — JOHANNA WAGNER AND VIARDOT GARCIA IN OPERA — HAENDEL CENTENARY AT HALLE

THE half yearly *Land parteien*, to which I have already alluded, were the only social functions of a recreational nature that ever took place under the auspices of the Conservatorium. The first of these was in the early spring, when the soft soil of the woods irrupted with *Schnee-glöckchen* in patches of cream-coloured fragrance. (The translated name "snow-bells" does not properly describe these lovely little blossoms, as they do not hang from the stem like other bell flowers, or like our snowdrops, but hold up their heads after the way of the crocus.) Their beauty so attracted us that many a couple broke away from the procession to gather large bunches of them, which, alas, before the day was ended made but a sorry show! The walk through the Rosenthal was of several miles before arriving at the *Milch Garten* where we were to lunch.

After a good hearty meal of raw smoked ham and a huge chunk of rye bread hot from the oven — the crust of which looked as if it had been shellacked and varnished — washed down with a generous glass of milk or beer, according to choice, we wandered about in green pastures, or threw ourselves down under the shade of an evergreen for a brief space, and then we all repaired once more to the large dining hall which was now, with the long table pushed back, to serve for a dance hall. And to what music did we dance! Ferdinand David, Dryshock, Grützmacher, Moscheles, with the charming condescension and *bonhomie* of the great, mounted the platform and furnished a volunteer band fit for the gods! They seemed to enjoy the fun of improvising our dance music as greatly as did the rest of us dancing to it!

When our simple festivities were over, we all paired off again and walked back through the now shadowy Rosenthal by moonlight. Many intimacies among the young people were initiated at such times; and for some weeks after these walks the familiar little papers of chocolate creams and nosegays of violets passed from hand to hand more frequently than before! The second country party was in the autumn, when everything happened in much the same way, the only change being in the ripeness of the foliage and the absence of the *Schnee-glöckchen.*

Every summer, and always at Christmas, Papa came to spend his holidays with us. These were times of great rejoicing, — tempered by misgivings. Would he be satisfied with us? Would he find that we were justifying the sacrifices that he and Mamma were making? Once this matter was settled and favourably, we gave ourselves up to the happiness of having him with us again. There was really no provocation for him to deplore our inferiority to other students in the Conservatorium; the position we held there forbade it.

For each of the summer vacations he took us away for change of scene, first to Thüringen, where we were permitted to give ourselves up to the *dolce far niente*, — scamper over the beautiful rolling country and roam through the forests.

The second summer he took us to Schandau, in the Saxon Switzerland, on the borderland of Bohemia, — and thereby hangs a tale!

On our way to Schandau we stayed over a day at Dresden, as Papa wanted to take us to the picture gallery, Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" being the most conspicuous attraction for us. Papa had also taken a box at the opera for us for that evening. When we returned from the gallery to our hotel, the proprietor approached Papa with an ominous look. He was followed by a stranger who quietly informed him that he was under arrest! Here was a pretty how-d'y do!

The explanation was that a man accused of forgery was known to be travelling in Germany with his wife and six children, his stature and colouring corresponding approximately with that of my father. The forger's family, it is true, consisted of two boys and four girls, but that little discrepancy in sexes was a trifling matter, the theory being that two of us were disguised as boys to throw dust in the eyes of the officers of the law!

Things looked very serious, and Papa was horribly nervous, for how could he tell where this absurd mistake might lead? In vain did he explain that he had just come from England to visit his family in Leipzig, — that we had been for two years students in the Conservatorium, and all the rest of it. The officer shook his head and said it would not do! The hotel proprietor, however, who had more sense, and who from the first was on our side, prevailed on the officer to let Papa remain in custody *en parole* till telegrams to Leipzig could be interchanged, either confirming or denying Papa's account of himself. This was accordingly arranged. The officer meanwhile kept pretty close to Papa, even keeping guard at the door of his room. But on hearing of the box at the opera, the temptation to hear "Fidelio," at some one else's expense prevailed over the usual red tape, with the result that we were permitted to occupy our box in his company. The officer was very civil during the performance, and it struck me that his suspicions had weakened considerably as he saw more of us. On our return to the hotel the looked-for telegrams from Schleinitz and Moscheles awaited us. The officer accordingly owned himself mistaken and with a most condescending air informed Papa that he was at liberty to pursue his journey to Schandau.

The next day we took a little boat on the Elbe which landed us at our destination, where a delightful sense of freedom took possession of us, — no doubt greatly enhanced by the thought of our unpleasant experience at Dresden!

That summer at Schandau has always remained a delightful memory, for our love of the country and appreciation of beautiful scenery had not diminished with our growth. Cousin John was also spending the summer with us, and every Sunday he had himself conveyed into Bohemia about five miles away to attend Mass, he being a devout Roman Catholic.

One auspicious day who should appear at our cottage but Arthur Sullivan! That was indeed a most unexpected pleasure for me! Oh, the wonderful rambles we took together, often scampering over hill and dale, hand in hand, with shouts of laughter for the very joy of it! He only remained a couple of weeks, but his coming glorified the summer for me. But apparently it is not intended that there should be any such thing as unalloyed bliss, even in a little paradise like Schandau! Sullivan's flirtatious propensity had a chance to assert itself even there in the wilds! On one of our long rambles, when we started to make a day of it, we fell in with a party of tourists from Ireland in some romantic spot. In the party were two distractingly pretty young girls with whom we forthwith struck up an acquaintance, and from that moment Master Sullivan was neither to hold nor to bind! He devoted himself to the prettiest of the two in the most barefaced way, to the complete neglect of myself. Was I jealous? I should say so! I was not angry with her, but I was very angry with him! When we reached home I treated him with marked coldness, absolutely refusing to listen to his remonstrances. As he bade me good-by next day — for this fall from grace happened on the last day of his visit — he said impressively, while looking unutterables, "You will be sorry when you know more than you do to-day!" There was some mysterious allusion in this speech which at the time, of course, I did not understand; what happened later, however, made it clear.

A week or two after our return to Leipzig, and after parting with Papa, Mamma announced to us one day that we were to have an extra evening at home with some of our friends. This was a great surprise, as never before had Mamma let us have a party in the middle of the week. She said, by way of explanation, that Sullivan had begged and begged for it, and she had given in. Of course we were nothing loath, but there was something queer about it, I thought, though Rosamond and Domenico seemed not to take my view of it. When the time came, Sullivan appeared, followed by Carl Rosa, Paul David and two other fellow students who were not frequenters of our Sunday evenings. They all four brought their instruments and desks with them, — an unusual proceeding, for the viola and the 'cello were not accustomed features at our musicals.

The strangers were duly welcomed to our supper table and initiated into the joys of jam tarts. After supper some excuse was made by Mamma to detain me in the dining room for a few minutes, after which I hastened into the music room to see what was going on. What was my bewilderment when I saw the four players seated gravely at their desks, Sullivan near them in a convenient position to turn the leaves — and — what I heard, as in a dream, was the introduction to the first movement of my Quartet! It was too much! My sensations cannot be described; I only know that I burst into tears, and that I sat listening to my composition, my face hidden from view to hide an emotion which I could not control! It was so wonderful to hear played what had existed only in my imagination!

Meanwhile Mamma was beaming at the success of her little conspiracy with Sullivan, and so were the others at having kept the secret so that not even a suspicion of the truth had entered my mind. As soon as my thoughts got out of their tangle, I began to do some wondering. I had not taken the trouble to write out the parts of my Quartet, — why should I? — as there was no chance of ever having it played? Now where did those parts come from? Nothing had existed but my score, which I had left among our music on the piano when we closed our apartment before leaving for Schandau.

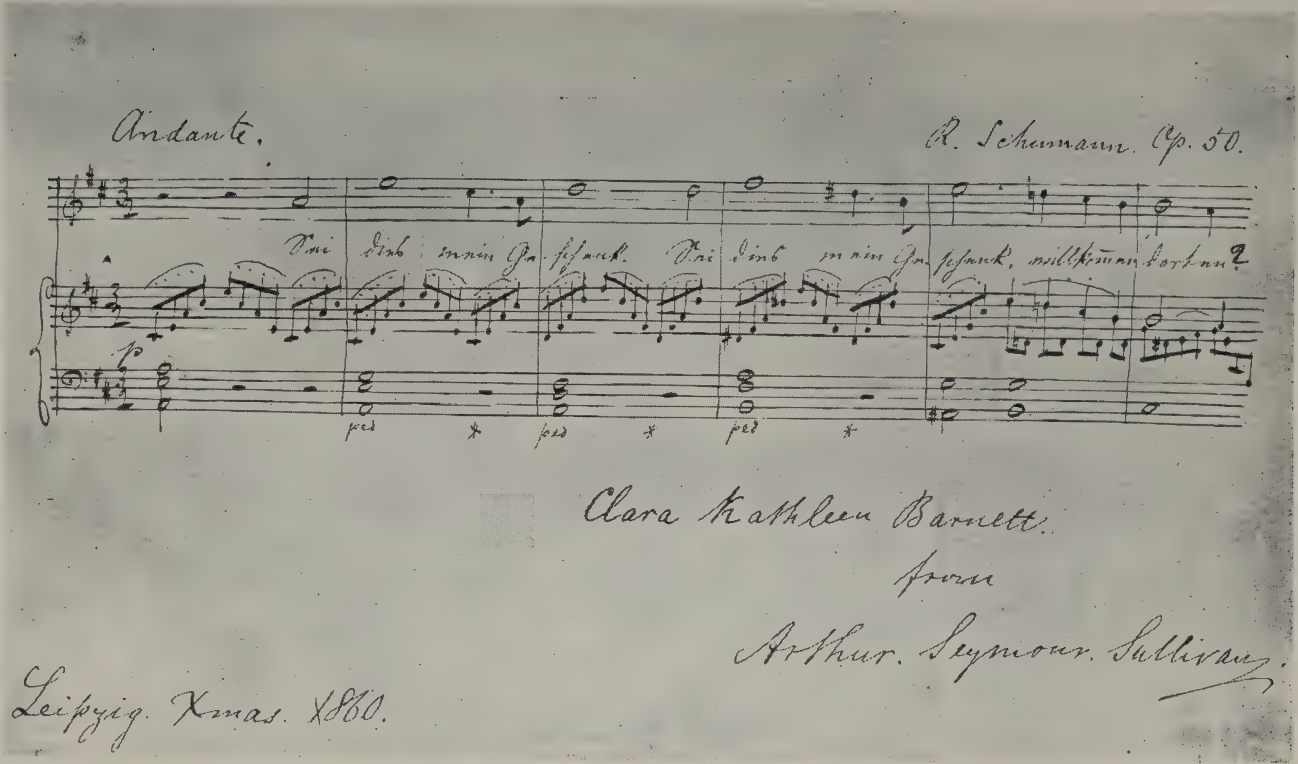
I now approached Sullivan very humbly, for I had been very nasty to him ever since we parted at Schanddau, begging him to tell me how it all came about.

His story, which he told with a sweet reproachfulness, was that when he came to bid us good-by the night before we left Leipzig, he fumbled among our music until he found my manuscript; this he managed to secrete when I was not looking, having already conceived the idea that it would be nice to give me the surprise of hearing my Quartet played, and reflecting that during the holidays he could take the time to write out the four parts from my score. Having completed that task before he joined us at Schandau, the next step was to get together four of the best players as soon as the Conservatorium opened its doors for the new session. He had, of course, to get permission to use one of the classrooms for rehearsal, which led to some curiosity on the part of both teachers and students, as they heard unwonted strains issuing from the classroom. "What were they about?" "Whose Quartet was it?" and so forth. When the answer came that it was a *Streisch Quartett* by the youngest Fraülein Barnett, some surprise and interest were shown, and Sullivan added, "I shouldn't be surprised if you were told to send it up for inspection, at the next examination."

As I listened to this story I felt very contrite and much ashamed at the thought of my bad treatment of Sullivan just because he flirted with the little Irish girl. This proof of his devotion touched me very deeply, and I concluded that his flirtations were, after all, only ripples on the surface of his feelings, and that when all was said he cared more for me than for all of the others put together. So we were quite reconciled, and from that time forward, or at least for some time to come, I overlooked his lapses from faith, frequent though they were.

It was part of Sullivan's very nature to ingratiate himself with every one that crossed his path. He always wanted to make an impression, and what is more, he always succeeded in doing it. Whenever some distinguished person came for the Gewandhaus concerts or to visit the Conservatorium, Sullivan always contrived to be on hand to render some little service which brought him to their notice and formed an entering wedge to their acquaintance. In this way he got into personal touch with most of the celebrities, while the rest of us only worshipped in the distance. It was this instinct, followed on a larger scale, that had much to do with his subsequent social success in high quarters and his intimacy at the Court of England. He was a natural courtier; which did not prevent him, however, from being a very lovable person.

The last of our summer vacations we spent in Denmark — at Kiel — our old longing for the sea luring us to the nearest available seaport. But although we spent a pleasant summer, being the recipients of much hospitality and friendliness from such residents as we fell in with, Kiel was a disappointment to us as a sea place. We missed the sandy and pebbly beaches, the pounding, sparkling surf of our child memories. It all seemed flat and lifeless in comparison; and the climax of our disappointment was capped when we found that the much-longed-for sea-bathing was only to be had in little square compartments where there was no room to


Andante.
R. Schumann. Op. 50.
Wie dir mein Ge-schenk. Wie dir mein Ge-schenk, willkommen dort nun?
p
ped
*
ped
*
ped
*

Clara Kathleen Barnett.
from
Arthur. Seymour. Sullivan.

Leipzig. Xmas. 1860.

DEDICATION OF AN ALBUM, GIFT OF ARTHUR SULLIVAN TO THE AUTHOR, LEIPSIG, 1860

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do more than bob up and down. The water was salt, it is true, but that was about all one could say about it!

On our way to Kiel we stopped at Hamburg, and there we were entertained by the parents of Carl Rosa, his father being the proprietor of one of the good hotels. They were good and kindly people, but there was nothing to indicate that a son of theirs should be endowed with artistic talent rather than business proclivities. Carl Rosa proved, however, during his career as manager and director of an opera company on a large scale, that he possessed both.

When Papa visited us in winter for the Christmas holidays our recreations were of another kind. He sometimes took us to the opera when there was anything we were eager to hear. The Leipzig Theatre was not much to boast of; the performances were of various kinds — vaudevilles, pantomimes, ballets and opera — with an occasional *Gast-rolle* or, as we should say, an imported star.

On the announcement of "Tannhaüser" Papa's curiosity was sufficiently aroused to take us to hear it, as he, like ourselves, was a stranger to Wagner's works, and I recall with amusement how hideous those chromatic passages in the overture sounded to our well-seasoned Leipzig ears, and how readily we took the academic ground that what Wagner wrote was not *music!* I heard Papa, under his breath, more than once make use of the word "Caterwauling!"

An interesting feature of the performance was that Johanna Wagner, Richard's niece, was the guest-star in the part of Elizabeth. I can recall how she looked even now — tall and stately, though not beautiful — and that her singing did not greatly impress us, though as an actress she was very fine. Her voice was more wonderful in compass and in possessing the dual quality of a soprano and contralto than it was for its beauty, as also her intellectuality was greater than her charm. Within two years of the time of which I am writing, 1859, Johanna Wagner lost her singing voice altogether and devoted herself to the drama.

Another notable operatic performance was that of Meyerbeer's "Prophete," with Viardot Garcia as "Fides." This made a great impression on me! What a wonderful impersonation of Fides was that! The depth, the passion, the pathos of it! It was not Viardot's voice that held me, — it was her art; she was in truth a great artist! We all felt a sort of family interest in the music, Meyerbeer being a distant relation of my father's, — a second cousin, I believe. He found in it much melody and great musicianship, but there were long stretches which seemed heavy both to him and to us. It had always been a puzzle to me that Moscheles admired Meyerbeer's compositions! It must have been because while he formed a sort of bridge between the old and the new he had not burnt his bridge!

We also were taken to Halle, for the unveiling of a statue to Haendel, on which occasion "Samson" was performed, and where most of the musicians of Germany congregated to honour the master. Cousin John, Sullivan, Rosa, Bache, Rudorff and Taylor had joined us. It was a great occasion, but I have no recollection of the performers. It was there I saw Liszt for the first time. He was walking up and down the platform waiting for the train and surrounded by a cortège of admirers of both sexes. We were aching to have Papa approach him and introduce his goddaughter, Rosamond, who wanted to tell him how much she prized the silver cup he sent her at baptism, now that she was grown up. But Papa shrank from invading the cortège and we could not get him to do it. "What's the good? He would hardly remember me!" was all we could get from him!

CHAPTER VIII

A PATHETIC STORY — RICHTER'S HARMONY CLASS — A MUSICAL THIEF — VOICE DEVELOPMENT — SINGING LESSONS — PROFESSOR GOETZE — ROSAMOND'S SINGING — GOETZE'S METHOD — THE COMET — A PHENOMENAL HAILSTORM — THE CONCERTINA AT THE ABENDUNTERHALTUNG

ALTHOUGH we, the Barnetts, were accused of forming a "clique" of our own, which was regarded as exclusive, it did not follow that we formed no other friendships among the students who were not invited to our Sunday evenings. On the contrary, we had friendly relations with a number of them, for we were by no means unpopular even if we were regarded as "aristocrats" among them.

I often recall the pathetic story of one poor girl who was my particular friend. She was a Russian whose name was Katinka Rosen. I can see her now, as she sat near me at some of the public classes, with her large gray eyes, dark hair, creamy complexion and full lips. She seemed to be instinctively drawn to me, and by common consent we became friends. She was gay, amiable, and of a most sympathetic nature. We always got together in the classroom when we could. Her parents had sent her to Leipzig from her home in Moscow to study music — as an accomplishment, not as a profession — and in order that she might have the best of protection they had arranged for her to board at a ladies' school of some pretension, where she had a fine room to herself and freedom to come and go as she pleased. Her allowance for pocket money was a very generous one, and there was everything to indicate that her parents in Russia were wealthy people. As time went on, I noticed that she was looking pale, but she only laughed when I alluded to it, and I could get nothing from her as to the cause. Soon she became irregular in her attendance, and for weeks we saw nothing of her; then she dropped out altogether. I became much concerned, not knowing at all what to make of it. At last, after talking it over, Rosamond and I decided to go to the school where she boarded to make inquiries. On doing so, we were told curtly that she was not there any more. This was a shock!

"Where is she, then?" we asked.

The servant, pointing to an uninviting-looking outhouse, said, "Over there; she's with Anna."

We followed the direction in which she had pointed and on approaching the outhouse, found Anna, who was a sort of female janitor at the school, standing at the door.

"We came to inquire at the school for Fraülein Rosen," we began. "Is it true that she is here with you?"

"Yes, I took her in, poor soul! I have not much to offer a young lady who is accustomed to luxuries, but such as my humble home is, I was glad to shelter her in it."

"Shelter her? What does it all mean?" we cried. Then the good woman told us that Fraülein Rosen's remittances had ceased to come, and that no word from Russia had been received for a long time; that in consequence the schoolmistress had told her that she could not have her there any longer, — that she must go. The inhuman creature had actually turned the poor girl out of doors without troubling herself about what might befall her! The worry at not hearing anything from her people had already caused Katinka's health to fail; that and want of proper food caused malignant anemia to set in. The good Anna had taken pity on her, sharing her humble fare with the poor girl and taking as good care of her as she was able to do.

She took us upstairs to a little room, damp and musty, and there, on a truckle bed, we found my poor friend, whiter far than the covering of the bed on which she lay. She smiled at us — a pathetic smile — but the stamp of death was already on her brow and she only left that truckle bed for the *Gottesacker*.

If only we had known! How gladly we would have helped her! But she was too proud to hint to any one that she was penniless until it was too late!

We reported the case to Schleinitz, who was greatly shocked. All available means of communication with her people in Russia were taken, but without result. Nothing was ever known of their destiny. Whether in some way they fell under suspicion by the Government and were imprisoned or sent to Siberia, no one will ever know!

It was an impressive procession that followed all that was left of poor Katinka Rosen to the *Gottesacker;* all her fellow students were of it, and we left the little mound covered with wreaths of flowers and filed home with saddened hearts at the pity of it!

I wonder whether that inhuman schoolmistress ever had any qualms of conscience? If so, she made no sign!

The study of harmony and counterpoint, which to me was of greatest interest, seemed to make but small appeal to the other members of Richter's class. It is true that our instructor was not exactly what one would call inspiring. But his lack of spirit may well have been due to his ten years' experience with pupils who would not take the trouble to learn what he was there to teach. He was a queer-looking little man with a round face, keen eyes, and a rusty-looking skin, — not overintimate with a razor. His ample mouth disclosed unpleasant-looking teeth, from which the two front ones in the lower jaw were absent. The fat cigar, from which he never parted, fitted perfectly into the space, so that it remained there a fixture, — leaving his upper lip free. My theory that he had purposely created the space to save the trouble of holding his cigar in his mouth was unanimously accepted.

By the way, Richter was such an inveterate smoker that even while he gave the students their organ lessons in the church he could not bring himself to abstain from filling the organ loft with tobacco fumes!

At the hour of our class lesson Richter took his seat at the head of a long table, on either side of which were ranged the pupils with their exercise books before them, pencil in hand. These books were handed up to him one by one for correction. In each was the chorale dictated by him in the foregoing lesson with a contrapuntal accompaniment for three or four voices which it had been our task to fit to it. His blue pencil was kept busy while he flung out every now and again "*querstande*" (false relation), "*verdeckte quinten*" (hidden fifths), and so forth, through the whole gamut of harmonic crimes which to-day form the bone and sinew of modern music!

My classmates who, more frequently than not, had either neglected, or been unable to do their exercises, used to waylay me in the corridor before the lesson and ask me to let them take a look at my exercise book, from which they covertly proceeded to copy freely, with the result that Richter, who was not as gullible as they thought, would remark as he peered over his spectacles, "You would better copy also the corrections from the book of Fraülein Barnett!"

One day after the class, a certain Fraülein P. approached me with a roll of music in her hand, and with an air of somewhat exaggerated humility asked if she might offer me a song of her composition? I could hardly conceal my surprise, as she had been one of those who to save herself trouble had drawn heavily on my exercise book, but the thought that there might possibly be a hidden genius among us fired my imagination, and I accepted her offering with enthusiasm, adding that I would get my sister to sing it on Sunday evening.

When on reaching home I opened the roll and saw a beautifully copied manuscript, I began to marvel; and when I played over the song I marvelled still more! It was a charming composition of great originality and most musicianly construction. I produced it triumphantly on our next Sunday evening as the work of "a girl in our harmony class." As soon as I played the first few bars, one of our number exclaimed:

"Why, Hornemann wrote that in my album before he left the Conservatory! And that little minx, Fraülein P., is passing it off as her own composition. It's abominable, I declare; she ought to be exposed!"

It was but too true! The song was by a very talented Dane, an advanced student in the Conservatorium — and an intimate friend of Grieg — who boarded in the house of the P.'s and who, having been suddenly called home for family reasons, left behind him a number of manuscripts which had not been reclaimed. As my Quartet had occasioned some interest, Fraülein P. conceived the idea that she also might come into prominence as a composer by appropriating Hornemann's manuscripts, of which there were quite a number. I could not bear the idea of exposing my fellow student and begged our friends to keep silence, at least for a time, — till we should see if any more such thefts should be committed. It was not long, however, before the girl exposed herself. On hearing that I had been asked to send up my Quartet and any other compositions of mine for inspection at the examination, she collected a number of Hornemann's manuscripts, and substituting her name for his on the title page, handed them in, in order not to be outdone by me. The Faculty, however, were not deceived. The compositions were promptly recognized by some of them as Hornemann's, and the upshot of it all was that Fraülein P. was expelled from the Conservatorium.

As this unfortunate happening was indirectly the result of my own achievement in composition, I may as well add that some good came of it too; for the fact that a female student had written a Quartet for strings suggested that in future members of the fair sex ought to have the opportunity given them to develop any unsuspected creative talent they might happen to possess. Accordingly, from that time forward there was also a composition class in the Conservatorium for girl students. I myself, however, never had a chance to profit by it, as this happened at the end of my last term there.

In the third year of our student life, having reached the mature age of fifteen, my voice, which had hitherto been a somewhat mixed and uncertain quantity, began to show signs of settling into a soprano. Mamma therefore thought it was time for me to begin work with Professor Goetze, in whose class Rosamond had progressed wonderfully. Goetze was so proud of her as a pupil that he was very glad to receive a sister of hers into his class, and he certainly made good use of me there.

It befell that my studies with him were much interrupted by repeated attacks of *Schnupfen*, a word which suggests "snuffles" more forcibly than head cold, and this — my misfortune — he turned to good account by getting me to play the accompaniments to all the songs in the lesson. Goetze himself never played. He sat at the piano and strummed an occasional chord, — seldom the one written by the composer. Playing the accompaniments under his direction was splendid practice for me, not only in sight-reading but also in making me familiar with "Scenas" and "Arias" as well as a large and varied assortment of "Lieder," besides impressing me with the best interpretation of these.

I have often since reflected that it was of much greater value to me to take in all of these mentally than it would have been for me to be singing them myself with the physical hindrances of immaturity, as I thus was furnished with a vivid ideal which stood me in good stead later when I was better able to attain it.

Professor Goetze did not have the best of material to work with in his classes. Where there was a good voice there was no musical sense, and where there was musical sense there was, but too often, an inadequate organ. The Vocal Department in the Conservatorium was accordingly not prominent. This, however, was certainly not the fault of Goetze, who was a most excellent teacher, fully equipped to train singers, very much in earnest, and painstaking beyond words. As I sat at the piano playing accompaniments, I could not but sympathize with him in his struggles to make some of those girls perceive the values of contrasted tone colors in the musical phrase, to say nothing of the most obvious rhythmic values; it was like trying to write on a cobweb! Small wonder, then, that his artistic soul found solace in teaching Rosamond, who was not only musically receptive, but who also had a charming voice and real dramatic fire. He naturally took every opportunity to put her down for some aria or group of *Lieder* for the Abendunterhaltung. She thus became the champion singer of the Conservatorium and was greatly admired and envied accordingly. In fact, Rosamond's reputation as a singer was much higher than as a pianist. Her hands were so small (she could barely span an octave) that it was impossible for her to achieve great things, though it was really remarkable how much she accomplished through great agility of fingers directed by musical intuition.

There was only one other singer of any note; her name was Muir. She had a good dramatic soprano voice and an effective personality, — tall, dark, and stately. She was also not hopelessly unmusical like some of the rest, though neither was she possessed of a keen musical sense. There was no rivalry between Fraülein Muir and Rosamond, the one being a soprano and the other a mezzo-contralto.

Goetze's method of developing voices was founded on correct diction, the correct sound of all the vowels and the relation of the vowel to the consonant forming the bone and sinew not only of declamatory singing but also of *bel canto.* There was no talk of "voice-placing" or of "local effort." Fine tone production depended on a fine perception of musical sounds, either natural or acquired. Not that he put it that way, but that was actually what it amounted to, as I recall it in the light of my more mature experience of to-day. I am persuaded that there was soundness in his method, and certainly the numbers of distinguished German singers who received instruction from him — among whom were Stockhausen and George Henschel — attest it. I myself feel that I owe much to him for the foundation he laid on which to build later. Goetze took much interest in developing my weak little voice during the short intervals between *Schnupfen* and *Schnupfen.* I was doubtless for him an embodiment of the too little recognized fact that the *ear* is generalissimo of the vocal organs. I say this because I was able to perform certain feats in vocalizing without in the least knowing how and with but little or no practice. It was quite evident in my case that mental audition was the man inside the puppet show that made the dolls dance! It was easy for me to conceive with the necessary rapidity each individual sound in any vocal flight, no matter how intricate, and this musical concept was in itself the driving force.

This last record may, perhaps, lay me open to the charge of egoism, nevertheless I brave it in the hope that some students who may chance to read these words may find in them a plea for the exercise of the ear as being the most important part of a singer's education.

It was, if I remember rightly, toward the end of July, 1858, that an extraordinarily brilliant comet appeared in the heavens and remained visible for several weeks, the atmosphere being during that period persistently clear. At first, the sight of it caused us unspeakable excitement, for it was truly wonderful to behold! But after the first week it became quite a familiar object in the deep blue sky, and we came to regard it as part of the usual stellar equipment. Whether the presence of this comet had anything to do with what I am about to relate I am not prepared to say, but the two phenomena have always been associated in my mind.

One afternoon we sallied forth in high spirits with a few of our friends for a walk in the Rosenthal. Before we had gone far something very unusual and ominous in the appearance of the heavens caused us speedily to retrace our steps. A dense sheet of cloud unlike anything we had ever seen before appeared. It seemed to start from the horizon, extending upward in a diagonal line till it spread itself over the vault above. The cloud was not of the usual gray tint, but of a dark greenish hue, and something about it awakened in us a great fear which had nothing in common with the fear of being caught in a heavy rainstorm! It grew suddenly very dark, and with the darkness an undefinable dread seized upon us. With one accord we cried, "Let us run for it; we must get home as fast as we can!" There was no time for parting words; our friends and we ran in different directions as fast as our legs could carry us.

We had just reached the door of our apartment after breathlessly tearing upstairs, when there was a terrible crash, followed by a continuous banging and pounding. The noise was deafening, but what was happening no one could tell, for it had suddenly become pitch-dark. Our servant girl began to howl with fright. "It's the end of the world," she cried, whereupon by some blind instinct she made a rush for a dark closet at the end of the corridor and there crouched like an animal at bay. Mamma and all the rest of us, who had been standing huddled in the corridor in a state of utter bewilderment, caught the panic and precipitately followed her example. There we remained for what seemed to be an eternity of horrible suspense, awe-stricken and paralyzed with fear, as the sound of shattered glass and roof-slating reached our ears, stunning our bewildered senses. We did not dare to open the closet door to see what we dreaded to see! Yet the suspense was getting to be unendurable, and the air of the closet was stifling. Suddenly there was a lull — then silence! We opened the door in fear and trembling, and to our amazement it was light — broad daylight once more — and our apartment was intact, save the windows on one side of the corridor, which were all smashed in. We now breathed freely and hastened to look out into the open, and lo, what a sight met our eyes! What we beheld was a complete midwinter scene. Not a leaf on a tree — the earth enveloped in balls of ice! And all this transformation from radiant summer to chill winter had been effected in less than half an hour!

The storm was quite over and the sky blue once more. Julius went down to the door of the garden to investigate and returned with a pail full of hailstones such as had never been seen before. It is no exaggeration to say that they were as large as average sized potatoes. So no wonder it seemed as though the house we lived in was being pounded to pieces with showers of such missiles fiercely projected against it!

Our door was soon besieged by a bevy of our friends who had come to see how it had fared with us, and in the hope that we might be able to afford them shelter for the night. They all had woeful tales to tell of the harsh way in which the storm had treated them, describing their beds and pianos as filled with shattered glass, their rooms a dump heap of débris, and quite uninhabitable. We took them all in and let them camp in our music room, which would have resembled a small ward in a hospital if it had been in better order. Some of the boys had fared much worse than others, according to the exposure of their rooms to the brunt of the storm.

The damage did not extend beyond a limit of six or seven miles, but within that limit the devastation was complete. All crops were beaten down, apples, pears, plums, nuts — all in their half-ripe condition — were dashed untimely to the ground; cattle and peasants were stricken in the field, overtaken before they could get to shelter!

On the following day the hailstones were piled up at intervals in the streets, after the fashion of cannon balls in front of an armory, to make locomotion possible, and for the next few weeks all the glaziers and roofers were kept busy. The excitement produced by this phenomenal storm was intense, and many were the theories and wild speculations as to the atmospheric conditions which caused it. The subject kept the local wiseacres employed for a long time, and much satisfaction was experienced at having so fruitful a subject for discussion!

I little thought, when I was taking lessons on the concertina in Cheltenham, that I should ever be called on to play it in Germany! I took my little instrument with me, however, because I liked to play sometimes for my own pleasure. But one day when Rosamond and I were taking a private "ensemble" lesson from David, he began to talk to us about his sister, Madame Dulken, a much-esteemed pianist in her day, who had concertized a great deal in England with Giulio Regondi. "My sister," he said, "used to speak with great enthusiasm about Regondi's playing of an instrument called the concertina; did you ever come across it in England?"

When I told him that I had not only heard Regondi play, but that I had taken lessons of his pupil Blagrove, and played it myself, he became quite excited about it.

"I want to hear it," he said. "Will you play to me when you come next time?"

Of course I complied with his request, and he was so pleased with it that he talked about it to Moscheles, with the result that I was asked to play the concertina at the next Abendunterhaltung. I hesitated somewhat as I was not what you would call exactly "in practice," but on trying over a "Fantasie" by Molique, which I had learned to play very well with Blagrove, I found that I could risk it without fear of disaster. I had no reason to regret it afterwards, for it really sounded very well, and all the Faculty were greatly interested. As for my fellow students, I think some of them were a bit snorty about it as an instrument not scheduled in the musical curriculum!

I do not know what has become of my instrument. In our frequent wanderings I suppose it was mislaid or lost. I sometimes wish I had it still, for I should like to take it up again to see how it would affect me now.

CHAPTER IX

LAST TERM IN THE CONSERVATORY — MADELINE SCHILLER — A YOUTHFUL PASSION BURNS OUT — PLANS FOR STUDYING IN ITALY — CARL REINICKE REPLACES RIETZ — THE "OEFFENTLICHE PRÜFUNG" — FAREWELL FUNCTIONS — LEAVE LEIPZIG FOR BERLIN — ADDENDUM

OUR sojourn in Leipzig was fast drawing to a close, as after our three years at the Conservatorium we were pronounced ready to graduate with honours and receive our diplomas. But there was the grand *Oeffentliche Prüfung* in the Gewandhaus looming up in the near distance, and as it was intimated to us that Rosamond and I would surely be of the chosen performers, it seemed worth while to remain for one more session in order to receive that last seal of approval and make a début before a real public. It was decreed, however, that Domenico should return to England with Papa after the regulation three years' course and start his career as professor of music in Cheltenham, so he left before we did. Aunt Mary accompanied the pair. It had become evident to us that on account of an invincible nervousness, which caused his health to be upset both before and after each performance, a public career as piano virtuoso was not for Domenico. But he was so thoroughly equipped both as a musician and with Plaidy's excellent method of technique that, with the prestige of a Leipzig diploma, he could count on a good future as a teacher.

His subsequent great success and the really enviable position he maintained in Cheltenham during his lifetime bore out the wisdom of Papa's decision.

Those last months in Leipzig were very precious. We enjoyed them greedily, as one does the last chapter of a thrillingly interesting novel! Our Sunday evenings were at their zenith, partaking as they did of our major advancement and higher musical perceptions. It was in the beginning of this last term that our number was increased by Madeline Schiller. Her really brilliant talent had already been so fully developed in England that her coming to Leipzig was principally for the *cachet* that she would obtain by being a student at the Conservatorium, and also that it might lead to playing at one of the Gewandhaus concerts, which it eventually did. Our Cousin John had also the same end in view when he went to Leipzig, which in his case, also, was finally — after four years — attained.

Madeline and I became the closest friends, and there were many confidences exchanged between us, particularly relating to Arthur Sullivan, about whom we compared notes, for it is almost needless to say that he flirted with her as violently as he was wont to do with every newcomer of note. I had long since concluded, however, that these flirtations were only fires of straw which quickly burnt out and always ended in his returning to his "first love." But I, for my part, no longer felt any distress at his goings on, as I had somehow outgrown my curious and uncanny — shall I say — "passion?" I now could look on as an amused observer without the least qualm of jealousy. But Madeline was, I could see, in danger of falling a victim to his charm, because she talked so constantly about him to me, always persuading me, however, that I was the one he really cared for and that he was only playing with her. She always spoke of him as the L. G. D., which stood for "little gay deceiver," — an appropriate name on the whole!

Meanwhile my attitude towards Sullivan had by some miracle undergone an entire change. He was no longer anything more to me than our other friends. I liked him, enjoyed his cheery and sympathetic companionship, but there the matter ended, and I found it much more comfortable that way. My thoughts were really at that time taken up with other things. We were facing an entirely new chapter of life, a complete change of base, as it were.

Though we were not aware of it before, Papa's secret ambition had always been that Rosamond and I should become singers, and his plan in sending us to Leipzig was to make good all-round musicians of us and fit us for pianists in case our voices should not develop in the way he hoped. How wise he was in giving us the opportunity to become good musicians I have since learned fully to appreciate, seeing, as I do, how many fine voices are wasted for lack of a cultivated musical sense, and what dire disappointment is suffered not only by ambitious voice students, but also by parents who have made immense sacrifices to have their children taught singing in the vain hope that a brilliant career was before them, — a career that might well have been brilliant had they only known, before it was too late, that a voice is only an instrument, and that it takes a musical creature to play upon it.

Professor Goetze's high opinion of Rosamond's voice and talent added to the fact that he foresaw also a future career as a singer for me, with the coming of further physical maturity, decided Papa to send us to

Italy to study for opera. It was arranged that we were to go there the following summer as soon as Papa could could get away for his long vacation to settle us there. Meanwhile, there were the six winter months that intervened to be disposed of, and it seemed hardly worth while to remain in Leipzig after we had finished our course at the Conservatorium and reaped our full harvest of *Kudos*. The matter was duly discussed with our friends, and Ernst Rudorff suggested, — "Why not go to Berlin? There is a famous teacher of singing there, named Frau Zimmerman, who has great influence in high circles, and who can make life very interesting for you. She will be only too glad to have you for her pupils. Then there is Von Bülow! Why not go to him for some finishing touches?" He added that his parents were in a position to be of great use to us, and that they would hail the opportunity to return some of the many kindnesses we had shown to him.

It seemed then that Berlin was the place for us, and our thoughts began gradually to detach themselves from our existing surroundings and dwell on what the future might hold for us elsewhere. We actually began to pity Sullivan, Madeline Schiller, our cousin John, and the rest of them who were to be left behind with no Barnetts, no Sunday evenings, and no more jam tarts to solace them! The outlook for them was quite forlorn, while for us it was full of unknown delights and adventure! A certain number of our companions, however, were also leaving for their respective homes at the time of our exodus for Berlin, so that our party would have been more or less broken up — or at least reduced — in any case!

A notable event occurred during the last months of our stay in the coming of Carl Reinicke to replace Rietz as conductor of the Gewandhaus concerts and teacher of composition in the Conservatorium, — Rietz having been commandeered by the King of Saxony to be conductor of the Dresden Opera.

It was no easy matter for Reinicke to replace the veteran Rietz, whose judgment and authority had remained unquestioned for so many years. Reinicke was a much younger man, with not yet a very wide experience, and although by no means ultra modern in his tastes, — for that day even, — he did not possess that ingrained feeling for the classics which coloured the musical horizon of Rietz, David, Moscheles, and their followers. The consciousness of this made him somewhat timid at first; he hardly dared to assert his independent conception of any time-honoured masterpiece, and we in the gallery at the Gewandhaus rehearsals felt a little impatient of his excessively deferential attitude toward David, at whom he invariably glanced anxiously when he started a new "tempo," as if to say — "Is that right?" We felt instinctively that, right or wrong, a conductor should have authority, for unless he makes his own conception felt, which he can only do with a strong conviction that it is the right one, there can be no magnetic current between him and his orchestra! I have no doubt that Reinicke — admirable musician that he was — got bravely over his diffident phase in the course of time and filled most efficiently the high position in which he found himself, but we were not there to see.

There were also new arrivals of notable students in those last days, among whom were Danreuther and Grieg. But we took no further note of what might happen in the future, or what geniuses might be arriving, or might arrive hereafter. There was now the excitement of the *Oeffentliche Prüfung* before us. It was decided that I was to play the two last movements of the E Minor Concerto of Chopin and Rosamond the first movement of the E Flat Concerto of Beethoven. The preparation for this great and glorious event, which included the creation of appropriate evening gowns, was about as much as we could attend to. It was for some time debated whether Rosamond should play or sing at the concert. Goetze said "sing"; Plaidy said "play." But Miss Muir, the only other presentable singer, was graduating also, and to her it meant everything to have such an opportunity, whereas Rosamond had Italy before her instead of being launched at once into public life, as was to be the case with Fraülein Muir, so it was decided that it would be fairer to have Rosamond play. It was a great occasion for us. I remember being excited as a war-horse, but not frightened at the formidable public.

These public tests had really very little in common with the Commencement exercises of our schools as they exist to-day. There were no speeches, no exordiums, and no public distribution of diplomas. It was just a plain, straight, dignified concert, the object of which was to give the public a sample of the developed talent that the Conservatorium was sending forth into the world at that time.

The diplomas, duly signed by the Faculty, were handed privately to each individual before leaving. The very last thing of all was the never-to-be-neglected privilege of collecting the autographs of all the professors, — of the most distinguished among the students, of personal friends, and of as many celebrities as we could obtain.

The most appropriate parting gift was, of course, an album! Each of us was the glad recipient of one. My album was given me by Sullivan. It was a pretty thing, bound in sea-green velvet, lettered and ornamented in scrolls of gold. It contained a very characteristic dedication from the donor. That album, which is full of interesting musical autographs, has outlived all the vicissitudes of our wanderings and is to be found intact among my treasured possessions in Boston.

At last the time of our departure had arrived, and all our friends were assembled at the door of our apartment to bid us farewell, as Papa objected to the confusion of their presence at the station. All were there except Madeline Schiller, whose absence from the group caused indignant comment. But when our cab had passed the door of the house in which she lodged, out she came running breathlessly, with a little package which she thrust through the window. It contained for me a pretty little collar of drawn work which she had made with her own hands and only completed at the very last moment, as she tearfully explained. And that was the last we saw for many years, of any of our dear companions, who were associated with so many happy days, except Sullivan, who came to see us in Berlin before he left for England.

Papa objected to our corresponding with any of our Leipzig friends on the plea that writing letters to them would take up our time and be an undesirable distraction, so that from that time they went completely out of our lives for a lengthy period, some of them never to enter again! Fortunately for us, we did not look into the future or there would have been a great sadness in that closing chapter of our lives!

During my entire stay in Leipzig I was a stranger to all book learning. In fact, I never looked into a school book of any kind after I left England at twelve years of age. Neither did I read much, for we had no library there. It was music, music, and always music that engrossed me, and nothing else seemed to matter! How ignorant I must have been I blush to think of now! In view of my utter illiteracy, it was a strange impulse which seized me to read Balzac's works; I forget what started me on that lay, but I managed somehow to get hold of the books and surreptitiously to read them nearly all. Did I understand what I read? Of course not! All the subtle touches and implied immoralities passed over my head, for I was as innocent as a babe unborn. But I must surely have found something in them that I craved as mental pabulum, or I should not have devoured them with as keen an appetite as I did. I suppose I must have got from each novel about as much as I did from reading George Sand's "Consuelo" when I was about eight years old.

CHAPTER

A WINTER IN BERLIN — APARTMENT HUNTING — VON BÜLOW — IMPRESSIONS — VON BÜLOW AS A TEACHER — HIS WIFE COSIMA

WE reached Berlin in December; the streets were packed with snow — stale snow that since its fall had never thawed but had lost its character by a solid impact of dirt and smoke. All street conveyances were on runners; there were no "droshkys" (cabs), and sledges took their place, — a permanent institution for the winter. It was dangerous walking, for at any moment your foot might unwarily strike a sheet of rough ice deposited on the sidewalk from an overflowing gutter.

We at first took up our quarters at a small and unpretentious hotel where our family of seven were crowded into three rooms. Judge Rudorff and his wife — I beg their pardon, Herr Geheimsrath and Frau Geheimsrathin von Rudorff! — hastened to extend to us the right hand of friendship and hospitality in consequence of a letter received from their son, Ernst, in Leipzig. They were delightful people! So cordial, genuine and kind! We found everything in Berlin so different from things in Leipzig that their advice was most welcome.

After much wandering about the slippery streets we at last found an apartment on Charlotten Strasse large enough to accommodate us. It was unfurnished, but the owner, Frau Gärtner, a dried-up little woman of sixty, assured us that she could have it furnished for us in a single day, provided Papa would be willing to pay the rent in advance for the six months that we expected to remain in Berlin. As she seemed a good honest soul and pathetically eager to get us as tenants — being without means of her own — Papa agreed to advance the money. So the contract was duly drawn up and signed.

Two days after we moved in and were ushered by Frau Gärtner into a *salon* ostentatiously replete with gilded mirrors, marble tables on gilded stands, chairs and settees to match, — all in the worst of taste and utterly unadapted to our requirements! It was with visible pride that the poor little woman introduced us to these gilded horrors. "*Sehen Sie mal wie schön!*" was her oft repeated ejaculation. It was evident that in her eyes all *was* gold that glittered. Well! We had to make the best of it as we did not want to hurt her feelings; besides we could, at least, comfort ourselves that we should not be held responsible for the choice of furnishings.

As soon as we were settled in our new quarters we called on Von Bülow. He received us politely, and after we had intimated our desire to take lessons of him, duly informing him that we had just graduated with honours from the Leipzig Conservatorium, he ushered us into his music room and asked us to play to him. I said I should like to play the last movement of the E Minor Concerto of Chopin, if he had no objection, as I had so recently played it at the *Oeffentliche Prüfung* in the Gewandhaus (I wished him to be duly impressed!).

He sat beside me while I played, and though I could not see the expression of his face, I was inwardly convinced that he must be astonished at the brilliancy and security of my performance, to say nothing of the musical interpretation! When I had finished and turned toward him, awaiting his praise, I saw no signs of amazement, to my great disappointment, but only a rather amused expression, as if he were saying to himself, "Yes, that is what I expected!"

After a short pause, he said, "You have great talent, but your playing is of the academic order which is the inevitable result of the kind of education you have received at the Leipzig Conservatorium, where everything is cut and dried. Your accentuation, your marking of rhythm is almost aggressive! We must change all that."

I felt that my conceit was taken down a peg, and I answered apologetically, "Herr Plaidy was always most insistent that his pupils should accent the first of the bar, without which, he said, no perfect rhythm could be maintained."

Then Von Bülow, with a still broader smile, said, "Let me tell you what a very famous old violin player, named Rhodes, once said: 'It took me one half of my life to learn to play in time, and the other half to learn how to play out of time.' It will not take you so long, but that is what I am going to teach you! You have, I can tell, innate musical feeling and a strong individuality; these, your gifts, must not be put under restraint in any shape or form. You can trust yourself to play as you feel; your feelings will lead you right. I should not say this to everybody, but that is neither here nor there. To you I say it advisedly!"

I began to feel happier at this and also to feel that he was right about it. Rosamond played him Mendelssohn's "Perpetuum Mobile." She had astonished Moscheles once at his house, on playing this, with the really remarkable agility of her tiny fingers and how much she accomplished with them! Von Bülow also commended the clever way in which she overcame the serious handicap of so small a hand, but, of course, he realized at once, as we all had come to do, that nature had not fashioned her for a piano virtuoso.

In my lessons with him, which we started without delay, he allowed me to play only Chopin and Liszt, the latter an entirely new departure for a Leipzig graduate! He encouraged me to play with a freedom that almost amounted to license, and I soon became expert in the use of the "rubato," an acquisition, by the way, which has since been invaluable to me as a singer. To be able to toy with rhythm, yet never lose the sense of it, is something which every artist must achieve.

I do not know whether at that time Von Bülow had other pupils; we certainly never found any one there before us, nor did any follow us. He never seemed pressed for time, and used often to keep us long beyond the allotted hour. He was a most interesting talker, full of anecdote, and as it was his wont to talk a great deal, both before and after the lesson, we had full opportunity to enjoy his keen and searching commentaries on both people and things. There was never any hesitation or reserve in his criticisms of other artists, and he certainly had a happy faculty of putting his finger on the raw! On the whole he was a delightfully interesting and inspiring teacher, and if there had been nothing else for us in Berlin besides our lessons with Von Bülow, that experience alone would have made our sojourn in Berlin amply worth while.

There was nothing in his appearance which could be designated as "commanding," for he was below middle height and somewhat slight of frame; neither was there anything notable in his features; but the keen, intelligent and masterful expression of his face labelled him at once as a person of distinction. It was the artist within the frame that at once held your attention and exacted your respectful consideration.

When our first lesson was ended Von Bülow led us into his library and thus introduced us to his wife.

"Cosima, I want you and my little English pupils to become acquainted." Rising from her seat at the writing table, there stood before us a tall stately woman, looking exactly like her father, Franz Liszt — in petticoats. Any one who is familiar with portraits of Liszt as a young man can form an excellent picture of his daughter, Cosima, without any further description. She received us with the greatest cordiality, and the great charm of her manner captivated us at once. After this first introduction it became an established custom for Von Bülow to say, as soon as my lesson was over, "Now you will go and stay with Cosima while your sister takes her lesson," and for Rosamond to join us later.

We loved to be with Frau Cosima. She had a most fascinating way of appearing to take us young people into her confidence and never seeming to bend from her habitual state to our unsophisticatedness. You would have thought she regarded us as her equals. Her interest in our future seemed quite unfeigned, and when we told her that we were going to Italy to study singing with the aspiration to become opera singers, she cried out enthusiastically, "Oh, let us take Italian lessons together! I want to learn to speak Italian."

When, years after, the news reached us that our Frau Cosima had quitted her husband and home to become the helpmate of Richard Wagner, my first thought was one of compassion for Von Bülow for the loss of such a companion! So much has since been written on the subject of this curious transference of partnership that any further comment of mine would seem to be superfluous. But in spite of all the various intelligent speculations as to the true inwardness of the matter, no one can ever know what the separation cost Von Bülow at the time. No one can gauge the fierceness of the battle he had to fight between his worshipful devotion to the Wagner *culte* and the surrender of his own rights, — of his own domestic happiness.

Truly a man has to be a good deal of a Spartan to yield his greatest treasure to another without repining because he believes that in so doing he is furthering a great cause!

Time, of course, which mercifully tempers the bitterness of all painful memories, came to the rescue in Von Bülow's case, enabling him, in the long run, to regard the whole proceeding philosophically, or, at least, to make a good show of so doing.

CHAPTER XI

THE RUDORFFS BEFRIEND US — SINGING LESSONS WITH FRAU ZIMMERMAN — EXAGGERATED PRAISE — MY MOTHER'S ACCIDENT — A DREADFUL PREDICAMENT — JUDGE RUDORFF TO THE RESCUE — FRAU ZIMMERMAN'S MUSICALES — PRINCE GEORGE — COURT MOURNING FOR WILLIAM IV — AN UGLY ADVENTURE

OUR good friends, the Rudorffs, strongly advised our following the suggestion of their son, Ernst, that we should study singing with Frau Zimmerman, who, they said, was regarded as a good deal of a person and who possessed the "open sesame" to all that was best and most worth while in Berlin, besides being a most excellent teacher. Provided by them with a proper introduction, we presented ourselves at the door of Frau Zimmerman's beautiful apartment, situated in a fashionable quarter, and in all its appointments strongly in contrast with our own, — the gilded furniture of which, even had it been in itself a joy, could never have compensated for the absence of the commonest and most necessary sanitary appliances, which the Berliners seemed to regard as luxuries confined to the rich!

Having pictured Frau Zimmerman as a commanding and dignified personality, by a natural mental association with her fame as a person of importance and on intimate terms with all the members of the Court, what was our surprise at being received by a very unpretending little woman, not much over five feet in height, robed in some sort of loose garment which did its best to conceal an absence of shape. Her sparse hair of a pale gray with yellow shadows which must once have been blond, was smoothed down over a high forehead and economically disposed on the crown of her head. Her large gray eyes and regular features were set in a broad oval face of which the skin was remarkably smooth and fresh for her years, which must have numbered well-nigh threescore.

It was a quaint little figure that greeted us with a simplicity and frank good nature quite her own. I have never met any one who seemed to be more utterly unconscious of her own personality, or of the impression she might be producing on others! It was those others who enchained her attention and interest to the complete exclusion of self. This peculiar characteristic must have had something to do with her immense popularity, which was on any other assumption something of a mystery.

Her friendliness of manner and complete absence of pose or artificiality put us at once at our ease and disposed us both to like and to feel at home with her. Of course she wanted to hear us sing at once, which we did to our own accompaniment, and when she found that we were educated musicians as well as inherently musical, her joy knew no bounds. She adopted us from that moment and took us into her big heart. It was with me a foregone conclusion that she would be pleased with Rosamond's singing, but it never occurred to me that she would also think highly of me, because I was so thoroughly dissatisfied with my own voice, which hardly ever expressed what I meant it to do and what I so longed to hear. The intricate roulades and chromatic trills which I threw off with such facility meant nothing to me! I liked to do it, but it was only child's play. They were childish stunts which were just good fun and nothing more! The only thing that I really wanted was to be able to express my emotions with my voice — to make my voice tell the story of *myself* — of all I was capable of feeling! And that greatest of all boons was denied me.

Frau Zimmerman, however, took a different view of the matter. Whether, under the influence of her optimism, I had outdone myself in singing to her, I know not, but be that as it may, she evidently thought it was something out of the common. I could not but feel a certain glow of pleasure at her obvious surprise, but it seemed that I must have produced that impression by some fluke, — that there was some hocus-pocus in it, and my pleasure was marred by the conviction that I should never be able to live up to her exalted opinion of me! As I understand it now, I realize that it was because her artistic standpoint was entirely different from my own, — that the qualities which I valued but lightly impressed her as signs of extraordinary talent. Accustomed as she was to the heavy German voices and declamatory singing, the smooth *bel canto* and clean-cut vocalization which flourished in my throat filled her with the wonder of novelty. Add to that the perhaps rather unusual combination of singer, musician and pianist which she found embodied in both Rosamond and myself, the inflated reputation with which she invested us was in great measure to be accounted for. As it was she sang our praises wherever she went, exciting a curiosity and interest in us among all her friends and pupils, which of course created a very pleasant atmosphere for us to dwell in. "You must hear my *kleine Engländerinnen* sing," was her constant refrain.

We were hardly settled in our apartment when one day Mamma, on sallying forth with Julius and the twins to make her daily purchases, slipped on an icy deposit from a gutter and measured her full length on the sidewalk. On finding that she could neither move nor stand when they raised her, she was conveyed home and a physician called, when it was found that a leg was broken. This was indeed a serious matter, for after the bone was set, it was necessary for her to keep her leg in one position for some time, so that all her duties as provider and caretaker had to be indefinitely suspended, and we children had to shift for ourselves as best we could. Our landlady, Frau Gärtner, showed much concern at Mamma's helpless condition, and good soul that she was, volunteered to do our marketing for us and help in every way she could. Julius also made himself useful, and the twins put themselves under bonds to be good and give no trouble. It seemed, however, that ill luck in our domestic arrangements was bound to pursue us. The next thing that happened was overwhelming! Poor Frau Gärtner dropped dead suddenly one morning of heart disease. This was indeed an unexpected blow! But the worst was not yet! The day after her death we received notice that the furniture would be removed from our apartment unless we stood ready to pay for it, as it had been purchased on credit, and only the first instalment had been paid. The prospect of inhabiting an apartment with bare walls was appalling, but equally so was the idea of paying all over again for the hire of all that gaudy stuff. How we regretted the good faith that had led Papa to advance the entire sum for the six months' rental of our furnished flat! And here we were all alone, without a man to fight our battle for us. What was to be done?

In our dilemma we turned to Judge Rudorff for advice, and our hearts sank when we saw how grave he looked when our statement of the case was submitted to his legal mind. He was very sympathetic though and very kind. Finally he said, "Leave it to me; give me your contract and receipt, and I will see what can be done about it." We breathed more freely when it was left in the hands of one versed in the intricacies of Prussian law, we ourselves being helpless as the babes in the wood to cope with the situation! We never knew just what Judge Rudorff did about it, or what argument he used to show that our receipt, signed by Frau Gärtner in due form, had precedence over the claim of the furniture dealer, but in a few days he brought us the consoling news that he had settled the matter satisfactorily, and that we were to remain quietly in possession until our lease was up. You can readily imagine our relief and that our gratitude to the good Judge knew no bounds.

Rosamond and I had now to do all that we could to assist in running our ménage, which, alas, was desperately little, for Mamma had never initiated us in any of the details of housekeeping, or encouraged us in making ourselves generally useful, on the ground that our time was better occupied with our music. I cannot but think that there must have been moments when she regretted it during that emergency! We ourselves most assuredly did!

We did not practice the piano at that time as much as might have been expected, partly on account of our domestic upset, but more especially because so much of our time was taken up by Frau Zimmerman, who constantly sent for us to sing for some distinguished person or other, besides keeping us indefinitely after our lessons for the same purpose.

Once a week she had a musical evening to which she invited the choicest among her friends and where a number of her pupils were to be heard in both solos and concerted music. There were some very good singers among them too — notably a certain Fraülein Jonas, whose warm and sympathetic voice I secretly envied, and a rich-voiced contralto singer, a protégée of Frau Zimmerman, who went by the name of "Die Perle." I never discovered what her real name was; I think she was of poor parentage and had lacked opportunity for much education, as her gifts seemed confined to a fine voice, which she used well — in the heavy German way — and a comely person.

The well-known Robert Radecke used always to assist at these musical evenings. He was Frau Zimmerman's dearest of the dear. Her tender affection for him was something more than maternal; it partook of adoration. I can see him now in my mind's eye, as he used to look on entering her hospitable suite early in the evening — according to his custom — before the arrival of the guests. She would throw her arms about him and fuss over him, finally settling him on a comfortable settee in a recess, with a table before him on which was a toothsome repast which he devoured with avidity, — tired and exhausted as he was after his work! He was of a good height and well-set-up, with singularly pale blue eyes, light brown hair and moustache, regular features and generally well favoured. He was, I should say, about thirty years of age at that time. We all liked him as a good sort, which was fortunate, for should any one have presumed to question his supremacy either as man or musician, she would most assuredly have been in Frau Zimmerman's black books.

I preserve the most delightful memories of those musical evenings. They were always interesting, and the auditors were always interested in what was offered them. The guests were apt to be more or less distinguished aristocrats and of the nobility, — their social importance, however, never detracting from the genial atmosphere which Frau Zimmerman invariably created. The keynote of the evenings was always informal, easy, and intimate. As soon as the music was over, she treated her friends to a little supper, generally consisting of smoked goose-breast, Italian salads (a delightful concoction of pickled fish and all sorts of sour-sweet pickled fruits), various sorts of sausages, and a large dish of grated brown bread — mixed with vanilla-flavoured whipped cream to top off with.

Among the many delightful people with whom we became well acquainted were "Frau von Olvers," formerly first lady of honour at Court, and her husband, who was at the head of the Berlin Museum, with their son, a student in the University, really fine, high-bred people, of Nature's aristocrats; Herr Geheimsrath von Rheinhardt and his lady, also of innate distinction. Then there was Prince George, who seldom failed to put in an appearance, and whose intense love of music and deep regard for Frau Zimmerman brought us into frequent contact with him. He was a tall and somewhat gaunt-looking figure, always in full regimentals, including his sword.

It was duly impressed on us that we must observe the strictest etiquette in our intercourse with him, no matter how graciously disposed he might be, and that we must never fail to address him as "*Ihre Königliche Hoheit*" (Your Royal Highness). Rosamond and I did our best to bear this in mind, but it seemed so unnatural to keep it up, in view of the friendly footing he assumed with us, that we almost unconsciously dropped his title early in our acquaintance and fell to addressing him as plain "*Sie.*" Nor did he appear to object to the omission; in fact, we more than suspected that the perpetual "*Königliche Hoheit*" was to him a boresome requirement to which he had, for the sake of Court ceremony, to submit.

Prince George had a way of dropping in unceremoniously while we were taking our lessons, making a sign to Frau Zimmerman on entering that no notice was to be taken of his presence. He would sit down in a corner of the room and remain there so quietly that we often ceased to remember that he was there. One morning after the lesson we were bold enough to ask him to play to us, whereupon, instead of showing that he considered it a liberty that we were taking, he laid aside his sword, and seating himself at the piano, with grave simplicity played us the first prelude from Bach's Well-tempered Clavichord. He looked as stiff as a poker as he sat there in his elaborate trappings, but he played very musically. Frau Zimmerman always showed herself vastly pleased at his friendliness to us. He always called us his "*kleine Engländerinnen,*" and consequently we were known under that name by every one.

I have so often been asked to what branch of the Royal family Prince George belonged that it may be well for me to explain the relationship. He was a grandson of King Frederick William II, who was nephew as well as successor of Frederick the Great. (He reigned from 1786 to 1797.) Prince George was, therefore, also a cousin twice removed of the insane King, Frederick William IV. That family taint had doubtless a strong influence over Prince George's life. It was said that because of it he had, as a matter of conscience, resolved never to marry. The regulation social life had no attraction for him. The Fine Arts were his especial interest, — they and a few genuine friendships formed the principal features of his restricted life. For my part I shall always think of him as a true gentleman of a scrupulously high moral fiber, refined tastes and gentle bearing.

At the period of which I am writing, January, 1861, the Court was in mourning for the death of Frederick William IV. It was therefore strict etiquette for every one to wear black in public. This happened most opportunely for us, as it enabled us to go about with Frau Zimmerman wherever she chose to take us without having to think of dress, — a simple black frock sufficing for all occasions. Social gatherings of a tempered gaiety among the nobility were still permitted, and to a number of these we were chaperoned by our devoted teacher during Mamma's crippled condition. The *salon* of the Von Olvers was one of the most enjoyable of these gatherings. There was such a charming atmosphere of innate refinement and high breeding engulfing all rigid observance of etiquette. The only strict observance was that every one had to rise on the entrance of Prince George and that no one could quit the assembly until his Royal Highness gave the signal by taking his departure. His tactful consideration for those present, however, in leaving early, prevented any one from chafing under the harrow of Court etiquette.

I always recall with delight one occasion when Desirée Artôt arrived at the Von Olvers after the opera — where she was engaged at that time — and all the assembled guests rose to their feet with a unanimous impulse as she entered. It was impossible not to feel how instinctively they honoured in her person the true Royal Highness of Art. There was no etiquette to prescribe *that* uprising! But I am writing of that good old Germany, the seat of simple living and high thinking. Alas, and yet alas! Where is that Germany now?

Frau Zimmerman always escorted us to our parties, from which, be it remembered, one took one's departure earlier than one starts to attend an evening function of that kind nowadays. The early hours, the convenient proximity of our respective dwellings, and the uniform simplicity of our attire made it possible to go on foot in fine weather.

One night, on returning from the Rheinhardts', on observing that our friend looked tired, we begged her to go straight home instead of accompanying us to our door as usual. She protested, but we, determined to have our own way, broke away from her with a hasty "good night" and hurried off alone. It happened that a certain music hall in the neighbourhood was just out, and as we turned our corner, a man accosted us with a horrid leer and kept close to us. We were petrified with fear and took to running breathlessly till we reached our own door when, to our horror, we discovered that we had forgotten the key! The street was deserted and behold, there stood our nightmare, grinning at our side. It is impossible to describe the agony of that moment! When lo, a sudden change of heart seemed to seize on the awful man; he said hurriedly, "Stay where you are, and I'll find the night watchman." He crossed the road and went into a beer cellar whence he soon emerged with the man he sought, armed with his pass-key. He opened the door with some grumbling remarks incidental to being disturbed over his beer, while we disappeared within as quick as a flash, forgetting to say even "thank you" to either one. I confess to having felt qualms for not doing so, for, after all, when we came to think the situation over calmly, the man had behaved very decently in the long run; moreover he must have had a good heart to be touched by our distress, and last but not least, what in heaven should we have done in that lonely street before a closed door, with no key, if that rowdy man had not accosted us? I need hardly say that we kept that particular little incident dark from both Mamma and Frau Zimmerman! It taught us the lesson, however, that even degraded human nature is not all bad!

CHAPTER XII

MEYERBEER — DÉSIRÉE ARTÔT AT THE ROYAL OPERA — PAULINE LUCCA AS A DÉBUTANTE — RADECKE'S CANTATA — A PORTRAIT OF FRAU ZIMMERMAN — A JEALOUS BARONESS — FORESHADOWINGS OF PRUSSIAN CONCEIT — A DUEL — ARTHUR SULLIVAN AGAIN — SAD PARTINGS — END OF LIFE IN GERMANY

MEANWHILE, we were progressing in our studies with Frau Zimmerman. We spent the greater part of our time in her hospitable home and comparatively little in our own. In spite of the fact that I still remained painfully dissatisfied with my own singing, I grew more and more convinced that voice was my legitimate instrument of expression. I felt, in a dim sort of way, there was that within me which, could I succeed in voicing it, would reveal me rightly to myself, but without which I was somehow incomplete. It had for some time been dawning on me that I could never express on the piano that inmost something which haunted my aspirations! That nerveless instrument seemed always to interpose itself between my fingers and the red-hot urge of my emotions; only an instrument that was part of my very self could speak for me! Little by little I found that my interest in piano playing was beginning to flag in spite of the delight I took in my lessons with Von Bülow, whose ideas on all matters of music I absorbed with avidity. Nor would I have surrendered such mastery as I possessed for anything! I rejoiced to know all that it meant to me to play, but I had learned also that the piano was not the instrument of instruments for me. It was not the *real thing!* So here I found myself with two different mediums of expression, neither of which brought me happiness. The piano *could* not, and my voice *would* not!

Frau Zimmerman informed us one day that Meyerbeer wanted to hear us sing. Of course, we suspected that she had been as usual blowing our trumpet. She continued that as he was not feeling able to go anywhere at that time, it would be proper for us to go to him, as otherwise there would be no opportunity for him to hear us, and we ought to regard it as an honour that he had expressed the wish. Of course we obeyed, as we always did any of the dear little woman's behests. She proceeded to coach us in a showy duet of his, the principal merit of which was that it was a fine vehicle for brilliant execution. The text, which was in French, was about a young girl protesting because her grandmother had forbidden her to do something or other. Rosamond was the objecting grandmother and I was the young girl who was trying to come it over the old lady by hurling at her a series of brilliant pyrotechnics. It was flimsy stuff! I think it must have been written in Meyerbeer's early youth, it was so old-fashioned in style.

When we arrived at his house, we were shown into a somewhat somber but richly appointed room with a grand piano in the centre. Meyerbeer received us with a most affable smile and made us feel at our ease by reminding us that we were relations of his, Papa being a cousin twice removed. He told us that he had the deepest respect for our father as a composer and pointed to a score of "The Mountain Sylph," Papa's first opera, — which he said he always kept near him on his piano. This made us feel very proud, of course!

Though small in stature, Meyerbeer possessed a great deal of quiet dignity and an impressive personality. His voice was particularly suave and gentle. It is needless to describe his features, as the public is familiar with his portrait amongst the celebrities with which our musical magazines favour us so liberally. He seemed pleased with our singing and said many nice things to us about it. He wanted to "do something for us" to further our interests in some way, but we told him there was nothing to be done, that we were going to Italy to study, and were not thinking of doing anything in public till we were ready to sing in opera, which idea he approved. Our visit with him was one of the agreeable episodes of our life in Berlin, and Frau Zimmerman seemed quite satisfied with the impression we had made.

I, for my part, felt no particular elation on that score, for I took Meyerbeer's praise with several grains of salt! He had impressed me as one who would always want to say the flattering thing if he possibly could. Moreover, I did not in my heart believe that there was anything in our performance of that duet which could appeal very strongly to one so constantly in touch with all the really great singers of the day as he was. I found myself as usual discounting everything that bore on the inflated idea of our beloved teacher, at least of my particular merit!

The head manager of the Royal Opera House, Herr von Hülsen, to whom we were duly introduced, put at our disposal a box for any of the performances we might wish to attend, — a generous offer of which we availed ourselves now and then. The only two operas I recall having heard were "Fidelio," with the much fêted Désirée Artôt in the rôle of Leonora, and "Rigoletto," in which, by some strange freak, she took the little part of Maddalena. Madame Artôt, with whom Tschaikowsky was at one time madly in love, was at this particular period engaged to marry a famous harp player named John Thomas, — Court Harper to her Majesty, Queen Victoria. He, having ascertained that some members of John Barnett's family were in Berlin, sought us out when he arrived there to visit his fiancée. We had not met before, but he knew Papa, for whom he had a deep admiration. He was by birth a Welshman of humble parentage, who by virtue of his extraordinary talent had raised himself to a position of high distinction. He had a very attractive personality which had evidently captivated the great prima donna, — temporarily at least! I say "temporarily" because the engagement never merged into matrimony. It died a natural death in the course of time. When we went to live in London, five years later, on our return from Italy, we were by way of seeing a good deal of John Thomas, but he never alluded to the circumstances of the broken engagement any more than to say, "It was not to be."

Pauline Lucca was at that same time making a furore at another theatre. It was her début there, but she had from the first carried all before her by force of her genius. Von Bülow was wildly enthusiastic about her, and after we also had been to hear her he used constantly to "talk Lucca" and rave over her with us after the lesson. We heard her first in Donizetti's "Figlia del Reggimento," and I can never forget the charm — the fascination — of that beautiful young creature! She was scarcely more than sixteen years of age, petite, piquante, and full of the vivacity and freshness of youth. Her dramatic instinct, her beautiful, clear voice — of a richness and fulness almost disproportionate to her size and tender age — were a marvel of precocious development. She evidently knew nothing about sparing herself, such was the whole-souled entirety with which she threw herself into her part. Von Bülow told us that after each performance she had to rest her voice completely for two or three days, the result — as he put it — of "tearing her voice up by the roots." He also predicted that her career would be "a short and a merry one" unless she learned soon the lesson of moderation and reserve! I am glad, however, that it was given me to hear "Lucca rampant." I have heard her many times since in other countries, and we have sung together in opera. She had by then acquired abundant poise and reserve. She was always a great artist and always magnetic, but she was *different!*

A cantata by Robert Radecke was to be produced in Berlin by a choral society of which he was director. I need hardly say that Frau Zimmerman was all of a flutter at the prospect and more assiduous than ever in cossetting her darling and feeding him up with good things to obtain a maximum strength for his extra exertions and nervous output. A bevy of her pupils were to add their fresh young voices to the chorus, and the cantata was rehearsed again and again at her piano. There were two important solos, — one for a deep contralto sung by "Die Perle" and one for soprano, which fell to me. That was all very well as long as we were making music amongst ourselves, but when I was informed that I was to take the soprano part also at the public performance, that was a little too much for me! I felt desperately unhappy about it and protested loudly. My solo, which called for deep expression, lay in the weakest part of my voice, over which I had as yet acquired no real control. It was still for the most part cold and colourless except sometimes, by accident, when there was a dawning of something warmer, — a premonition, perhaps, of a latent power to be achieved anon. How desperately I deplored Frau Zimmerman's mania for pushing me into prominence! I hated the idea of singing in public till I could sing to suit myself, and all my teacher's optimism never caused me to have any illusions as to my actual merit. No one can imagine what I suffered from my keen consciousness of my own inadequacy!

But all my protestations were laughed to scorn. It was the same old story. "Though there might be better voices, there was no one as musical as *die kleine Engländerin*, no one as sure; no one who could as well be depended on," — and so forth! Alas, I almost bemoaned the fate of a singer who happened to be musical as well! To be hauled into things against one's will just because the conductor could feel more at his ease was nothing short of a nuisance! Well! It was of no good to resist further. They insisted, and I had to do it. As to the performance itself, when at last it came off, my principal recollection of it is, how glad I was when it was over! The cantata was enthusiastically applauded, I remember, but for my part, even though Radecke and Frau Zimmerman may have been satisfied with my singing, I was not!

Frau Zimmerman was to have a portrait made of her by Hensel, — an artist much in vogue in high circles at that period. There were to be three sittings, and Prince George had intimated his intention to be present on those occasions. The sittings were to take place at different houses, to be selected by her in conjunction with the artist.

It was known that there were only three families in Berlin that Prince George ever honoured with his presence. It therefore entered the head of a certain Baroness von R., who was not one of his chosen friends, that if she could only induce Frau Zimmerman to select her luxurious apartment for one of the sittings, the honour of entertaining his Royal Highness within her walls would give her a social importance which her title alone had not achieved. This same lady had from the first singled us out for marked attentions, doubtless on account of Frau Zimmerman's extraordinary interest in us. We were frequently invited to *Kaffee Klatchen* where, seated around her handsomely appointed table, a dozen or more of her kind were liberally fed with choice cakes and coffee, which had the effect of duly stimulating their gossiping propensities.

A few days after the first portrait-sitting, which took place in Frau Zimmerman's own music room, our friend the Baroness called on us to ask, as she said, "a tremendous favour," which was that we should persuade Frau Zimmerman to choose her *salon* for the next sitting. Her plea for appealing to us was that we had great influence with Frau Zimmerman, — that she would do anything we asked of her. Of course our vanity was tickled; it invested us with some importance to be asked to intercede for our friend in such a matter. So we made up our minds that we must live up to her estimate of our power.

Frau Zimmerman demurred when we first broached the subject, on the plea that Prince George might object, but we agreed that such an occasion was quite exceptional, — not at all to be counted as a social function of the sort that Prince George refused to attend at the houses of others than his chosen three. We ended by gaining our point and hastened to announce our success to the Baroness. Meanwhile, Frau Zimmerman had told the Prince of our special pleading, and he had answered with an amused smile, "Of course, if the *kleine Engländerinnen* want it, it has got to be."

Now what happened was this; the Baroness, purposely ignoring the understanding that we were to assist at all of the three sittings, made her arrangements without letting us know the time appointed for the sitting to take place at her house, and Frau Zimmerman, taking it for granted that she had done so, did not happen to mention it. The result was that when the time came we were not there. Some surprise at our absence was expressed by Frau Zimmerman and others; the Prince, for one, said, "*Wo sind denn meine kleine Engländerinnen?*" much to the chagrin of the Baroness, whose clumsy excuses gave rise to thoughts not overflattering to her, and which resulted in our being sent for. When the messenger arrived, however, we declined to go, so indignant did we feel at what we now could not fail to recognize as an underhand proceeding on the part of the hostess.

We were deeply offended and did not hesitate to show our resentment of her base ingratitude in throwing us over as soon as she had gained her point in obtaining through us the honour of his Royal Highness's presence under her roof. Frau Zimmerman, who was much distressed about it all, told us next day that the Prince was greatly displeased at the omission, perhaps divining something of its cause, and that he showed his displeasure by quitting the seance very early.

We were at first puzzled to find the true motive for our quandom friend's conduct, but Frau Zimmerman said it was to her and the others present quite apparent that our presence was not desired by the ambitious Baroness because she hoped to secure for herself by our absence the attention which he, out of his friendliness, was always wont to bestow on us. That incident ended our friendship for her as, in spite of the humble apologies with which she plied us, we were too disgusted with her behaviour to tolerate any further intimacy with her.

Another instance, premonitory of the Prussian spirit of to-day, was as follows: Our indefatigable trumpeter asked me one day to play something to a distinguished visitor of hers who was a great judge and critic of music and preëminently classic in her taste.

On seating myself at the piano in compliance with her request I said, "What shall I play? Some Bach?"

"Anything you like," she answered.

I suddenly bethought me of a little piece of my own, which was effective. Running through it was a quaint little figure, but it was certainly far from classical in style! The lady, however, having listened to it with ears attuned to the suggestion of Bach, failed to detect in it a more modern spirit. When I had finished she let herself go in eloquent panegyric over Bach's inimitable treatment of his theme. With a tactlessness which I hope I have outgrown, I exclaimed, "That was not Bach, it was mine."

The lady flushed up, but bravely held her own. "It is the most marvelous reproduction of Bach's manner I have ever heard!" she exclaimed, emphatically. "Wonderful, wonderful indeed! I make you my compliments for entering so perfectly into the spirit of the great Master." From that moment the good lady — to save her reputation as a connoisseur — always addressed me as "*die kleine Bach!*" There was something intensely humourous to me in her attitude, but there was also something more! The lady was a Prussian and therefore could not be mistaken!

One evening as we were returning from some social gathering, escorted by young Von Olvers, a student of some rival University pushed his way past us, and in doing so made some remark, the substance of which escaped me but which evidently had some sinister significance for our escort. He excused himself for a moment and, pressing forward, arrested the attention of the offender. A few rapid sentences were exchanged in a low voice, after which there was an exchange of cards. It dawned upon us suddenly that there was to be a duel! But we could get nothing from Von Olvers as to what had passed between the two.

Rosamond and I were in deep distress. We hardly slept a wink that night! After much debating, we resolved to go next day and unburden ourselves to the mother of our defender, in the hope that she might take steps to prevent the duel. On tearfully narrating our tragic tale, Frau Von Olvers, instead of reproaching us for getting her son into trouble, began to laugh.

"You poor children, you need not take it to heart the least little bit; put it out of your heads at once! In any case no blame could be attached to you! Let me tell you that our German students are always on the alert to take advantage of every least opportunity to fight a duel, and those who can show the greater number of scratches and slashes plume themselves the most. A student for the sake of his reputation must fight just about so many duels, and my son is doubtless feeling grateful to you for unwittingly affording him an excuse to distinguish himself in your defence!"

Imagine our relief! We could hardly believe what we had heard, neither were we quite easy in our minds until the news reached us that the duel had taken place, and our cavalier had remained unharmed. It is evident, you see, that our childlike habit of taking things seriously had survived our childhood's days!

At about that time Arthur Sullivan unexpectedly appeared on the scene. He had finished his course at the Conservatorium and was in high feather at the honour conferred on him of performing his incidental music to Shakespeare's "Tempest" at the Gewandhaus. He had come to Berlin to see us once more before our flight to Italy. Of course he brought us all the latest news from Leipzig of our friends who had outstaid us. He told us of Madeline Schiller's brilliant progress, of our Cousin John, who had at last obtained his heart's desire in playing at a Gewandhaus concert, which ambition had actually determined his going to Leipzig to study. He also told us of such students as were most in evidence and regarded especially promising, amongst others the young Norwegian, Grieg, who had entered the Conservatorium in 1858, but who had not come especially into notice up to the time of our departure. Sullivan's interest was great in what we had in our turn to tell him of our experience with Von Bülow. But he wondered greatly at our readiness to set aside our piano playing after all the new inspiration received from him. It seemed to him something of a waste to have taken lessons of Von Bülow if our real ambition was to be opera singers. However, he was not considering the value of the artistic growth resulting from Von Bülow's teaching and of the basic art principles laid down by him to us in our future career as singers. I, to this day, have never ceased to be grateful for it! I can see in it an integral part of my own musical evolution. It was Von Bülow who unawares taught me to be a teacher!

It was the month of June. The lime trees were fragrant in Unter den Linden, the birds were carolling their songs of summer, and the time of our flight to Italian skies was drawing near. Papa was to join us presently, and already we were beset with that feeling of restlessness which belongs to the pulling up of stakes preparatory to a new departure. Mamma was on her feet again and able to actively superintend the preparations for our approaching journey. There were many farewells to be made which would be hard for us, for great was the kindness we had received at the hands of our many friends. But much of the sadness of parting was swallowed up in the excitement of looking forward to what the future might have in store for us.

Our parting with our dear Frau Zimmerman was the hardest of all! She knew, and we knew that as far as she was concerned, it was the end! She would no longer have her hand on her *kleine Engländerinnen*, and we should no longer be buoyed up by her enthusiasm. It was the close of an interesting and vital chapter in our lives, and of an episode in hers that was dear to her. She was a sad little woman in those last days. Not alone because she was to lose us, but also, and more so, because her ewe lamb, Radecke, was also in a measure slipping away from her. He had just announced his engagement to a pupil of hers, Miss Jonas, she of the beautiful voice that I so envied, and although the match was one that she could not but highly approve, yet she knew that it must necessarily destroy the sense of proprietorship of Radecke which had endured for so long and which to her was so sweet. It was pathetic to see how hard the dear woman tried to bury her own feelings and rejoice in his happiness. We understood, and we felt for her a deep sorrow, all the deeper because we too were abandoning her and could bring her no consolation! But youth and sadness do not dwell together long. The pathetic note in that last page of our life in Germany was, after all, only intermittently sensed by us. We were under the spell of the unknown!

The next thing to happen was Papa's arrival in Berlin. Then came the final pulling up of stakes and the last hurried farewells. From that time forward all would be novelty, excitement and — what else?

PART III

AN OPERATIC CAREER IN ITALY

CHAPTER I

JOURNEY TO ITALY — AT MILAN — AN OPPORTUNE FRIEND — GAETANO DE LORENZI — SAN GIOVANNI — A SETBACK — AMAZING CUSTOMS — MUSICAL MILAN — LESSONS WITH SAN GIOVANNI — OPERA AT LA SCALA — GOUNOD DIRECTS HIS "FAUST" — AN ELUSIVE QUEST

IT was in the summer of 1861 that we started for Italy, full of enthusiasm and vague expectations of great things. The journey thither was to me a revelation in grand scenery. There was the Viamala Pass, which Papa, Rosamond and I made on foot, — scorning to remain shut up in a coach where cataracts were falling and pounding over rocks and boulders on their wild rough and tumble rush to the Rhine. Never shall I forget my first view of the Swiss Alps! It was my first sight of giant mountains. At first they inspired me only with awe. Was this the tremendous boundary that separated the world we had lived in from our world to come? Yet, when we reached the little Swiss *chalet* where we sought refreshment, how quietly — how serenely — it seemed to nestle in the arms of those rugged giants, which, when we found ourselves in close touch with them, had by some miracle lost their awesomeness. It all appeared as part of God's country with a smile on its face.

Toward sundown we started over the Splügen Pass. Again we left the coach to the tenderfoot contingent of our party and tramped up the mountain, gathering strange Alpine flowers on our way. A young fellow passenger, who had been "making eyes" at Rosamond, climbed a precipice to get some Edelweiss for us. How wonderful it all was! How life seemed to tingle in one's veins! The sun had now sunk behind thick clouds, and a heavy rain set in, which drove us back to the coach for shelter. After being for hours confined in the close air of the coach, parched with thirst, can I ever forget the joy of that copious draught of beer when we reached Chiavenna before daybreak? Our driver, who also had an all-pervading thirst, lost no time in giving us the opportune tip that Chiavenna beer was the best in the world. And never was announcement more welcome! The beer of Chiavenna certainly deserved its fame as well as the everlasting gratitude of the thirsty traveller. To us it seemed that that clear yellow refreshing brew outnectared the nectar of the gods.

We reached Como in the early morning and there exchanged the wabbly coach for the railway carriage. After being rushed through roads between miles and miles of irrigated meadow-land which, we were told, yields two full crops of grass every summer, we reached our final destination, Milan, the Great Cathedral City, which was to be the scene of our new musical birth. We soon found a suitable apartment near the Piazza del Duomo, thanks to a certain Gaetano De Lorenzi, who appeared promptly on the scene in response to a letter of introduction secured by Papa before he left England, and who from that moment installed himself as our guide, philosopher, and friend.

Signore De Lorenzi was a distinguished-looking man of about sixty, tall and well proportioned, with a white moustache and imperial. His nose was aquiline but not too pronounced. For a man of his age he was decidedly handsome and his manners were most agreeable. He spoke English quite well, which was a boon to us, as none of us spoke Italian. He undertook to speedily remedy that, however, for it was arranged that he should give us an Italian lesson every day. He was not a professional teacher of the language, being a man of private means, but he liked to be brought into contact with the English people who from time to time came to Milan, and whose society he found much to his taste, the teaching of his language forming an excellent excuse for a pleasant intimacy with them. As he was not only highly educated, but both well connected and a prominent figure in Milan, it was soon apparent that we had "fallen on our feet" in securing him for a friend. He devoted most of his time to us; took us about and showed us all the most interesting objects, at the same time explaining to us the historical facts connected with what we saw, so that we obtained also an insight of the Italian morale and point of view. He was in himself a liberal education!

He proved to be also an admirable teacher. He gave us such a clear idea of the underlying principles of the language, which, after all, were quite easy to grasp, that we were able in a very short time to construct sentences offhand. Our accent, he found, was admirable, — a natural result of a trained musical ear. It was not long before grammar and exercises gave place to a study of Dante, which with so fine a classical scholar as De Lorenzi was a privilege! I think that our opportunities for learning choice Italian were unusually fine, and it is not to be wondered at that we could speak it fluently in less than six months. We often used to take long walks with him in the country, when only Italian was spoken, and this gave us an assurance and glibness of speech which all the lessons in the world would have failed to do.

One of the first things to be decided on when we were settled in our apartment was which of the two teachers we should elect to study with, — Lamperti or San Giovanni? De Lorenzi, who undertook to obtain a consensus of opinion as to their relative merits, reported that what he had gathered was that the greater vogue of Lamperti, whose name was so frequently associated with successful singers, was largely due to his control of the most active operatic agency in Italy, which caused numbers of ready-made singers who wanted to be launched to study with him for a few months in order to obtain his interest in getting them engagements to sing in good opera houses; that Lamperti, as a musician and interpreter, did not compare with San Giovanni, who had been for many years coach to the celebrated contralto, Alboni, and constantly in attendance in all her travels, which gave him the opportunity to hear all the greatest singers of the day and become familiar with their interpretations.

These qualifications appealed to my father, for Alboni had been a name to conjure with in England and the names of the great artists who composed the casts of the operas she sang in — such as Pasta, Donzelli, Tamburini, La Blache, Rubini, and a host of others — were guarantee that San Giovanni had the traditions of all that was best in Italian operatic art. Our choice accordingly fell on San Giovanni, to whom we duly made application, with the result that he called on us promptly to hear us sing and arrange for lessons. In appearance he was the typical Italian on a large scale — of a good height, full-chested, broad-shouldered and well fed — though not of the oily variety. His face was broad, his eyes, hair and imperial black; his general expression comfortable and good-natured, rather easy-going. His smile, which disclosed two even rows of small white teeth, was frequent and most engaging.

Rosamond was the first to sing to him the grand air from Rossini's "Tancredi." She was in good voice and quite outdid herself. San Giovanni was greatly pleased with her and began at once to cite the different operas in which she would have great success, such as "Cenerentola," "Semiramide," "Lucrezia Borgia," "Linda di Chamounix," "La Gazza Ladra" and "Il Trovatore."

Then came my turn. It was not my day for shining; I knew that beforehand. I sang "Voi che sapete" in rather a perfunctory manner, conscious all the time that my voice was saying nothing that I meant it to. When I had finished he turned to Papa and said, "It is a pity that she has so little voice, because she sings so musically and phrases so artistically, but, of course, she cannot look forward to singing on the operatic stage; she has not voice enough to make herself heard. However, she can become a very finished parlor singer, and in that capacity will doubtless give a great deal of pleasure."

This was scathing judgment, coming as it did close on the heels of my inflated Berlin successes. My parents gulped it down as best they could, finding no doubt some consolation in the assurance that there would be at least one operatic star in the family! Strange to say, San Giovanni's pronouncement made not the least impression on me! I knew that he had not really heard me sing; that I had not sung in such a way as to reveal any of my real possibilities. I was not a bit disappointed or discouraged; I could wait. Deep down in me somewhere was a conviction of power unexpressed — of a power which would some day force its way through my weak throat and reveal itself in all its fulness. Of course San Giovanni had nothing to go by but what he had heard, and what he had heard contained nothing of Me.

For the next week or so, though nothing was said by my parents or Rosamond that could hurt my feelings, I was quite conscious of having been put in a back seat; I was of less importance than before; I had in some subtle way lost caste in the family! But I did not care, as my innate sensitiveness would have led any one to suppose that I would do. I knew that I could afford to bide my time; that was the secret of my serenity!

This resignation to the postponement of my own revelation was, I think, in a measure due to the physical lassitude induced by the sweltering heat of the Italian climate, so new to us, which made it always seem that one might do to-morrow what one could not do today. We had never known what heat was before, except in proximity with a tall German stove. But that heat one could escape from, while this scorching heat pursued us wherever we went. Everything we wore seemed to be an encumbrance and a superfluity! We shed one garment after another and were forced at an early date to discard anything in the form of a hat or bonnet and adopt the Milanese custom of wearing a black lace scarf fastened to the back of the head, brought down over the shoulders and fastened at the waist in front. It was a very pretty and becoming headgear to which we took quite kindly.

One thing that bothered us very much during our first weeks in Milan was the tiresome system in the shops of asking double or more the price they expected to get for every article purchased, no matter how insignificant its cost. Even such a trifling article as a spool of cotton or a paper of hairpins was not too small to escape the usual haggling which to us seemed so absurd and so humiliating, but which custom one had to fall in with in self-defence. At first, and before we were initiated, I suppose we paid double for everything we bought without being aware of it. One day Mamma was attracted by a beautiful lace scarf in a shop near the Piazza del Duomo. We went in and asked the price of it, which we were told was fifty francs. Mamma said she would take it and drew out her purse to pay for it, when the salesman hesitated a moment and then said rather meekly, "Well, you can have it for thirty francs, because it is you."

We thought this was such a strange performance that when De Lorenzi came to see us in the evening we told him about it and asked him what it meant. He laughed and then explained to us that the shopkeeper, in asking fifty francs, had expected to be beaten down at least one half, that the scarf was probably worth twenty-five francs, — but that on seeing that he had to deal with an innocent customer his conscience smote him into beating himself down, with a reservation! This was our first lesson in the *marchander* system with which we soon became so painfully familiar.

Signore De Lorenzi told us that Rosamond and I must never go out unaccompanied by Mamma or some other escort; doubtless a highly proper precaution as even we were willing to admit, for the boldness of the men in expressing their admiration of the fair sex on every opportunity — with or without excuse — was sufficiently convincing that an unprotected girl might easily be subjected to annoyance. As it was, the casual ejaculations which met our ears in passing, such as "*Bell' angelo!*" "*Che begli occhi!*" "*Simpatica!*" — flung about indiscriminately, were rather amusing and quite harmless. One soon became accustomed to it, taking it as a matter of course.

As one trod the streets of Milan song was in the very air. From almost every open window there issued vocalized arpeggios and scales, with frequent strains from some opera of Verdi or Donizetti. Milan was like one huge conservatory of singing. Teamsters, errand boys, and workmen hummed or whistled tunes from the operas as they went on their way. The potential "Prima Donna," tenor, or baritone was in evidence at every turn. In Milan, opera houses took the place alike of theatres, music halls and dance halls; there were always four or five of them running at the same time, and always a summer opera house, with the blue sky for a roof, where the audience feasted on salted pumpkin seeds as we do at the circus on peanuts. The cost of a seat in the gallery at any of these was so trifling that no one was debarred from music, and familiarity with all the current operas was therefore as common to the poorest among the working classes as to the rich. Every cobbler, every jobber, was a more or less intelligent judge of singing. They all knew what was good from the Italian point of view and assumed the right to express their opinions with uncompromising freedom. When there was something they did not like they hissed and whistled derisively. Indeed they often indulged in more specific expression of disapproval by calling out, "*Cane*" (dog) to a flatting tenor, or "*Antipatica*" to a prima donna who was "*persona non grata.*"

To sing in opera in Italy was at best a good deal of an ordeal until an artist's footing with the public was assured. On the other hand, when the public was pleased, the spontaneous bursts of applause were beyond words inspiring! There was no such thing as waiting decorously till the end of a piece before applauding; they shouted their "*bravos*" and "*benes*" at the moment of appeal to their artistic sense, almost, as it were, an unconscious expression of feeling, and it was precisely such unpremeditated outbursts of enthusiasm that excited and goaded the artist into surpassing himself. There was something real about it, and what is *real* is always magnetic!

I remember how surprised and how amused my father was at his first experience of the critical habit of the illiterate. A man had come to repair the lock of our antechamber while Rosamond happened to be taking her lesson of San Giovanni. Papa, who remained in the antechamber, noticed that the workman every now and again nodded his head approvingly and at last broke out quite unconsciously with a hearty "*bene, benissimo!*" This musically receptive attitude of the common workman was a new revelation to him, though ere long it became quite an old story to us.

San Giovanni came to our apartment three times a week for lessons. At first he went through the form of confining our studies to vocalizing, but after the first week he rushed Rosamond into a Rossini opera, "La Cenerentola," and me into songs by Donizetti. He told us, however, to go on practising exercises by ourselves. It became evident that he did not consider it his task to teach tone production or to develop voices.

He proclaimed quite frankly that it was his business to teach people to sing if they had voices; he did not believe voices could be made. He once told us, with a humorous twinkle, of an English tenor who presented himself as a pupil with the special purpose, as he said, of acquiring a "*La di petto*" (an A in chest voice). "I told him," said San Giovanni, "that I did not keep a factory of *Las di petto*, and sent him packing."

He laid particular stress on the value of constantly hearing good singing and becoming familiar with the sound of fine voices. He wished us therefore to be regular subscribers to La Scala, where all the best singers were to be heard because adequate salaries were paid by means of an ample subvention from the Government which rendered the success of an ambitious impresario an assured thing. Accordingly we attended, from the first, every performance, which means that we heard the best singers in all the current operas every night of the opera season, except Fridays, during the year and a half that we studied in Milan. What an opportunity! We occupied nightly the same seats in the orchestra — Mamma, Rosamond and I — and our devoted friend De Lorenzi, who, as he also was in the habit of subscribing, constituted himself our escort and companion.

It was the custom in Italy to continue performing the same opera every night for two or three weeks or longer, if its success with the public demanded it, instead of offering a different bill each night, as is usual in England and America. It is easy to understand, therefore, how familiar one must have become with every note of the music and every nuance of the performers with such constant repetition. Thus we heard one hundred performances of "Faust" almost in succession when it was produced at La Scala for the first time under the direction of Gounod himself, — who came to Milan on purpose to supervise its presentation. After it had run six weeks another opera was duly staged in fulfilment of the manager's agreement, but the public would none of it. It was hissed off the stage, not because it was unworthy, but because the public had not yet had their fill of "Faust." And so it happened with each successive opera that interrupted its run. I believe I could have written from memory almost every note of the score before we got through with it! There was not an intonation, a nuance, or a gesture of any one of the artists that had not made an indelible impression on me. As the presentation was one of almost ideal excellence in every respect, what better artistic object lesson could one ask? I realize now that my real education as an Italian opera singer took place at "La Scala."

Meanwhile San Giovanni confided to me in the early days of my studies with him that he had to own himself entirely mistaken in his estimate of my vocal capacity.

"Your voice is not remarkable; it is a small voice, but it has charm and it will suffice to ensure you an operatic career. All the other elements that go to make up the true artist are yours already."

This new verdict of his did not affect me any more than his original judgment of my insufficient power had done. I was glad for the sake of my parents that the promise of a successful prima donna in me was held out to them, but that was not all in all to me! There was "the voice of my Dreams" for me to find, — that Voice that was *myself*. I had inklings of that dream-voice every now and then. I heard from myself those searching, insinuating tones which sent a thrill through me more and more often now, but they were not always there. They came and went, I knew not why, nor did I know how to coax them back again when they left me. San Giovanni could not help me at all in my quest for some way of enchaining that magic sound. And yet I felt that there *must* be a way, if only I could find it, — a way to hold and keep it for mine always!

The singers at La Scala had no such fluctuations of voice as I had. They sang night after night with the same fluency — the same security — the same spontaneity — the same control of expression. How did they do it? I would have been willing to give up ten years of my life to any one who could tell me the secret. But there was no one! I heard from time to time much talk about the right emission of tone, but when it was a question of *what* it was or *how* to get it, no one seemed to know!

How I worked! How I strove! How I listened to those great ones at La Scala with devouring ears in the effort to extract their secret from them! How I watched them to see what was happening at the throat and chest, never suspecting that what I saw was not the *cause* of what I heard; that the *cause* was hidden and invisible, because it was of the musical sense — of the mind and spirit. The more I tried to imitate what I saw, the farther I seemed to slip from my bearings.

And so things went on from month to month without any conspicuous change, although there was some added substance to my voice, due, no doubt, to the impressions received from the voices I heard at La Scala.

CHAPTER II

ITALY IN TRANSITION STATE — EVERYTHING GERMAN IGNORED — MOBBED AS AUSTRIAN SPIES — A NARROW ESCAPE — NOT A FRIEND IN NEED — SPIES BECOME HEROINES

AT the time of which I am writing — 1861 — Italy was passing through an exciting transition period. It was the end of the Bourbon rule; Garibaldi had resigned his power and retired to Caprera, and Victor Emmanuel had been proclaimed King of Italy. Cavour had gone to his last rest early in June. The hated Austrian uniform was no longer to be seen in the streets of Milan, the much loathed German tongue no longer offended their ears. There was still trouble in Rome, which was opposed to a United Italy, and Venetia was still fretting under the Austrian bit, but Lombardy — beautiful, smiling Lombardy — was once more basking in the sunshine of freedom after long though not patient suffering. The bitter hatred of an enemy under whose yoke they had been so ruthlessly stricken had, however, not yet had time to die out. The word "Austria" was still pronounced with set teeth and fists automatically clenched.

Rosamond and I, only dimly aware of this strong aftermath of enmity, innocently made an effort to keep up our German, which was in danger of becoming rusty, by speaking it together in the streets as well as at home; but we had to abandon our well-intentioned resolution in double-quick time, in dread of the threatening attitude and scowling looks of the passers-by as they caught the guttural sounds of the hated tongue. Everything seemed to conspire to put Germany and all that was German out of our thoughts, including German music, both classical and modern, for which there was no use in Italy!

You cannot live in a foreign country and maintain sympathetic relations with the people without, to a large extent, falling in with their views, — at least, not when you are young and impressionable, and we were both! So, little by little, the memory of our life in Germany grew dim, — the dimness making it seem almost like some shadowy experience belonging to a pre-existence. From that time forward there was only Italy, Italian ideas, Italian music and Italian enthusiasms. After all is said, we must admit that there is a strong fellowship between the young and the chameleon!

About a couple of months after we settled in Milan we had an adventure which nearly cost us our lives and which I can hardly recall to this day without a shudder. It was our custom — as indeed it was the custom of every one in Milan — to seek refreshment in the cool of the evening in the Public Garden, situated at the further end of the Contrada di Vittore Emmanuele. A great concourse of people wended their way thither every evening, — some promenading, others driving on the Grand Corso, which lies parallel with one side of the Garden, rendered gay by numerous splendid equipages in which the nobility and more opulent of the citizens disported themselves in gala attire. Near the entrance to the Garden from the Grand Corso stood a pavilion where a band played several times a week and to which an alluring open-air café was a valuable adjunct. On band nights not one of its innumerable tables remained unoccupied for more than half a minute. Throngs of people sat toying with a *sorbetto* or a *granita* and sipping delectable iced drinks. It was a gay scene, full of cheer and animation. This was during the summer season, when La Scala was closed, and when all social gatherings and all pastimes were in the open.

Our faithful friend, De Lorenzi — to whose care as guardian my father had consigned us — always accompanied us on our evening promenades; but on the memorable occasion of which I am about to write he had been called to the bedside of a sick friend, and we were left to take our airing on the Corso without a male escort. It happened that Rosamond and I had donned for the first time blouse waists of a beautiful shade of yellow, trimmed with bands of black velvet. A lady in Cheltenham whom Papa had consulted had selected these blouses for him as the most appropriate present he could take to us, they being known there as "Garibaldis." Over these garments we wore only a light gauze scarf, which was allowed to fall loosely away from the shoulders, thus disclosing the colour of our blouses. We noticed that people stared at us more than usual, but though it made us feel uncomfortable, we attributed it to the accident of our being without our usual escort.

Suddenly, when we had reached the Grand Corso and were walking peaceably along, Rosamond to the left, I to the right of Mamma, a dark, angry-looking man rushed at me and laying rough hands on my scarf, jerked it up over my shoulders, at the same time crying out in a loud voice, in Italian, of course, "Cover your shame! Cover those shameful colours!"

Dazed and stupefied, I simply followed my instinct to resent the unwarranted assault by throwing back with indignant gesture the scarf he had so rudely raised. It had somehow never occurred to us that yellow and black were the Austrian colours, and it was only when he continued, — "So you are not afraid? I'll soon make you afraid. *Spie d'Austria!*" (Austrian spies) that the full significance of the situation dawned on us!

Our persecutor then withdrew hastily and ran to the spot where the throng was thickest, haranguing the people as he went by. "Of what stuff are you people of Milan made to permit friends of Austria to flaunt their detested colours in your midst? Come and see for yourselves the shameful display. Shall we permit them to go on their way unpunished? Have at them!"

The cry was taken up and passed from mouth to mouth. "Friends of Austria!" "Austrian spies!" Horrible moment for us! What would they do? Stone us to death? Tear us in pieces? We were paralyzed with fear. I could not have uttered a word if my life depended on it! My throat was parched, my tongue as stiff as a dry bone.

Meanwhile a great crowd was collecting around us; we were surrounded on all sides except just at the entrance from the Corso into the Garden, so that we were pushed and squeezed into it. Instinctively we moved forward toward the lower end of the Garden abutting on the main street, where there was as yet no crowd, but we were soon surrounded on all sides by that seething mass of shouting and howling inhumanity. Every now and then a stone was thrown, tentatively, as it were, and once some one tore at my blouse, but no determination seemed to have been reached as to just what they would do to us. A child's voice was heard above the din, "*Non fate male alle povere Signore*" (don't hurt the poor ladies), but nothing happened. Evidently no one was ready to take the initiative, to strike the first blow! The suspense was dreadful, — worse by far than a deadly assault! Meanwhile we crept along, the encircling masses yielding to our pressure little by little. In this wise we reached a place in the centre of the garden, where we came up against a wooden bench. With one accord we sank down upon it, not altogether because of failing strength, but rather by some blind instinct to give our tormentors opportunity to take a quiet look at us and see how harmless we were, much as one would do to a shying horse. The astounding thing was that all of the crowd remained stock-still also, many of those fronting us following our example and squatting down in groups on the grass at our feet. They had now quite ceased to howl at us; they were fairly quiet. It seemed almost as if the crowd were waiting to see what *we* would do next rather than that we were waiting for our fate to be determined by them.

The psychology of a crowd under such circumstances, by the way, might prove to be an interesting study! We were, however, in no mood for any such reflections. If only my tongue had not petrified! I might then at least have said, "*Siamo Inglesi, e non Austriache,*" even although my vocabulary was at that time not rich enough to attempt an eloquent disclaimer of their vile accusation. Mamma and Rosamond were evidently in the same case. Alas, how humiliating to record such an abject condition! Think of three honest, respectable and normal human beings stupefied — paralysed — frozen stiff — unable to say boo to a goose! It was the nameless horror of the unknown that possessed us!

After this tentative allowance of five or six minutes for inspection we rose from the bench and bent our way toward the lower entrance to the garden, the crowd still yielding to our pressure, when, oh, joy, through the tall iron gate which separated the Garden from the Contrada Vittore Emmanuele, we saw coming towards us a young clerk from the bank where we were in the habit of cashing our drafts, and who had always been particularly polite to us, seizing upon our visits as a good chance to air his English. The sight of a familiar face in the midst of that mass of strangers — of a fellow creature who knew who we were and who had a tongue at his disposal to explain the situation — was almost too good to be true! A messenger from Heaven could hardly have been more welcome!

He approached us with, "What is the meaning of all this?"

I heard myself say from some unknown part of my anatomy — it could not have been my tongue! — "You see, we are so unfortunate as to be inadvertently wearing the Austrian colours, and they are taking us for Austrian spies. Won't you please explain to them who we are?"

His face grew livid with fear. He took in the situation only too well! "I don't dare to," he faltered. "They would not believe me; they would only fall on me for defending Austrians. I advise you to make a rush for the gate; you are quite near it. Once in the street take the first cab that passes." With that he passed on and mingled with the crowd. There was indeed a noble specimen of a Preux Chevalier! It may be that scorn, contempt, and our extremity all took a hand in sharpening our panic-stricken wits, for we seized the opportunity, while the attention of the mob was momentarily diverted by what was taking place between us and the young man, to make a sudden dive, through a relaxing quarter, for the gate and into the street, following the advice of our chicken-livered friend. An empty cab was passing; the driver, noticing the mob, stopped to see what it was all about. We jumped in with the nimbleness of acrobats and he — the driver — nosing a substantial reward for salvage, whipped up his horse.

As soon as the mob realized that we were escaping them they started to chase us, aimlessly throwing stones after us as they went and showering a volley of invectives at the cabman who was "a shameless and twice accursed son of Austria! !" In less than ten minutes we were safe in our apartment once more — grateful to be still alive and unhurt — but oh, how spent with what we had been through!

An hour or so later De Lorenzi appeared at our apartment, anxious and alarmed at what he had heard at a café about two young girls with a matron who had defiantly flaunted the Austrian colours on the Corso, in the face of the multitude, and who had been mobbed, stoned and the clothes torn from their backs as they well deserved, etc., etc.! (The man who had excited the mob and made the first assault on the culprits was a certain Count Pertosati whose family had been tragically victimized and his property confiscated by the Austrians. The sight of the hated colours always had the effect of crazing him.)

Certain inquiries made by De Lorenzi satisfied him that the victims of their wrath were no others than ourselves. Then our friend rose in all his might and magnificence and held forth to the occupants of the café to some purpose. By the time he left they were pretty well ashamed of themselves, the absurdity of supposing for a moment that Austrian spies would have been likely to invite detection by publicly displaying their colours having at last dawned on them! Also, that the persecution of three unprotected women — strangers in their midst — was hardly consistent with the Italian ideals of chivalry!

Next morning De Lorenzi came to see us, fearing that we might be suffering from reaction. He told us that our affair was the talk of the town, and that the papers were full of it. He brought us some of them with sensational headlines in which we were described as distractingly beautiful — as heroines — as miracles of courage and resourcefulness. (Ye Gods!)

When we told him that we could not bring ourselves to go out again until the excitement had blown over, he objected. "On the contrary, you must set aside all self-consciousness and go about as if nothing had happened." We obeyed and sallied forth as usual. At every street corner men were stationed shouting out, "*Gran fatto accaduto a Milano*," to call attention to certain printed slips that they were selling in great quantities to the passers-by, price one centime. We took one as we passed. Under the sensational title (translated) "Great Event which occurred at Milan," we had the somewhat grim pleasure of reading a most wonderfully garbled account of the uprising on the Corso and Public Garden. Every sort of extravagant eulogium was used to our glorification, interspersed with violent deprecation of the inhuman, dastardly and barbarous behaviour of the populace.

I cannot help reflecting how fortunate we were to be spared from seeing our faces also misrepresented in print, that added horror to notoriety with which we are so painfully familiar to-day. In those days of milder enterprise the camera was confined to the photographic studio and had not yet found its way into the hands of the reporter.

On the Corso that evening, under the wing of our guardian, we were the observed of all observers, which we, of course, affected to ignore. And for weeks after the event we kept receiving papers from all parts of the country, with eloquent editorials and chivalrously inspired articles by sundry passionate correspondents. San Giovanni remarked to us one day, almost with a groan, "If only you were ready to make your début in opera now!" It had grown to be all very amusing to us, and we read each new account of our adventure with the greatest gusto. We had actually come to think that it was something for us to be proud of! Meanwhile, I need hardly say that the beauteous yellow and black Garibaldis were consigned to oblivion in a bottom drawer!

CHAPTER III

DASHING YOUNG OFFICERS — ACQUAINTANCES — VANZINI — A FIRST AND LAST BALL — MILAN CATHEDRAL — ARRIGO BOITO — EXPERIENCES WITH SAN GIOVANNI — ELATION AND DESPAIR — MISUNDERSTOOD — FAMILY MATTERS — SANTLEY AT LA SCALA — A CRUEL REPRISAL — AN ITALIAN AUDIENCE

OUR guardian had two sons, both of them dashing young officers in the Italian army: Eugenio, the younger, a lieutenant; Gustavo, the elder, a captain — with whom he made us acquainted. His wife, to whom he was wont to allude as "La mia Ercolina" —in a tone which suggested a time-honored but somewhat obsolete appendage — was on friendly terms with us also. She was a quiet, unobtrusive woman, who might perhaps have been attractive in the freshness of her youth, but who then impressed me as having consciously and resignedly outlived all claims to consideration; so prevalent in Italy is the accepted idea that after a woman has reached threescore she only exists on sufferance!

The two young officers visited us frequently in the beginning, while they were temporarily stationed at Milan, and I recall with perennial amusement the kind of conversations that took place between us. Gustav, the elder, who spoke a little — very little — English, being the more reticent and less temperamental of the two, rotated naturally toward Rosamond, while Eugenio, the lively one who spoke not a word of English, fell to me. Talking being as much a need of my being as breathing, it was unthinkable not to keep up an animated conversation of some sort! But my Italian vocabulary was in those first days so limited that my remarks consisted chiefly in quotations from opera librettos which I adapted to the situation as best I could on the spur of the moment, an occasional misfit eliciting peals of laughter from my lively visitor.

The exercise of my linguistic ingenuity was, however, soon nipped in the bud by the departure from Milan of our young officers, who were called to station elsewhere.

As time went on we made other acquaintances, chiefly among the English, who, like ourselves, had operatic aspirations. The most intimate of these was a young tenor named Morgan, a pupil of the aged Nava, — a famous teacher in his day, but whose laborious method was ill suited to the prevailing impatient spirit of the modern student. Morgan was a great wag and used to entertain us with all sorts of stories about the eccentricities of our compatriots, who never seemed to know how to adapt themselves to Italian usages. He had always a great deal to tell us about his friend, Charles Lunn, an enthusiast who had tone production on the brain, and who in after years became well known in England as the ardent exponent of the system of "breath control by the false cords," his books and other writings on the subject having won him a reputation for profound scholarship. But while he was in Milan he afforded us an unfailing source of amusement — via Morgan — who often came primed with "the latest utterances of Charlie Lunn."

Another good friend of ours was Signora Lucca, wife of the head of a large music publishing firm — rival to the house of Ricordi — a nice, fat and comfortable-looking lady, who was extremely kind and well disposed towards us. While visiting her one day, a young American appeared on the scene, bearing a letter of introduction to the Luccas from her singing master in Philadelphia, an Italian whose name I do not recall. Her name was Van Zandt, and her purpose in coming to Milan was to get engagements to sing in Italian opera. She came to Signora Lucca for advice.

"Sing me something, *cara mia*," said the good lady, whereupon I volunteered to play the accompaniment to "Caro nome" from "Rigoletto" from memory, as she had not brought any music with her.

We were unanimous in our praise of her singing. She had a well-trained voice of excellent quality and compass and was an admirable singer in all essentials. Signora Lucca admitted that she was already quite well equipped as a candidate for success in Italian opera, but she advised her, nevertheless, to take a short course of lessons from Lamperti to facilitate her object in getting engagements. Van Zandt followed her advice and in a month or so was launched in opera by Lamperti, and from that time forward was known to the public as Madame Vanzini (pupil of Lamperti). She sang for many years at Covent Garden in London, and her daughter "Jenny Van Zandt" in her turn became a favourite with the public.

When I came across Vanzini again it was in America, many years later. We were both of us prime donne in the Parepa-Rosa Opera Company, and we renewed our acquaintance on the friendliest of terms. I remember her telling me once with a gusto which did credit to her sense of humour how she took her little daughter Jenny — who, owing to a precocious development of voice and musical instinct was recognized as a "child-wonder" — to sing to Adelina Patti, and how Patti, on hearing her, exclaimed enthusiastically, "She ought to have been born of *me*, not *you!*"

The only dance I ever went to in all my life was at the house of the Luccas, whose spacious apartment was well adapted to a ball. All the men I danced with were strangers to me, and for the most part miserable dancers. There was only one with whom it was really a pleasure to tread a measure, — with whom the "poetry of motion" was not an unknown quantity, as with the others. Therefore, when he sought me three or four times in the course of the evening, I was nothing loath to repeat my gyrations with him, never dreaming that there could be any reason for declining.

Next day I received two separate shocks as a result of the ball. The first was a request from Signora Lucca that I would permit her friend the famous sculptor S. to take a cast of my shoulders, the modelling of which had attracted his attention on the preceding evening. The second was when our guardian took me severely to task in Mamma's presence for dancing three or four times with the same man. It was an "unpardonable indiscretion," he said, and one that must never be repeated if I wished to retain a shred of reputation; that I had already given a wrong impression of myself to my partner and to everybody else; that in Italy such conduct could not be indulged in with impunity!

Coupling his alarming words with the fact that a sculptor had presumed to think he could obtain permission to make a cast of my shoulders for the asking, I felt criminal indeed, outside the pale of decorum or of redemption! I felt rising within me at the same time a wave of righteous indignation! It seemed an outrage to be debarred from indulging any preference one might feel for one partner rather than another, — to be forced through convention to suffer a man for whom one might perhaps feel a repulsion to encircle one with his arm! If dancing, which in itself is naturally a pleasurable excitement, was to become a vehicle of painful compromise with one's feelings, I would none of it! Accordingly I drew myself up in all my dignity and announced with finality that last night's ball would be my last ball. And I kept my word, for I never danced again. From which you may justly assume that at sixteen I was a very uncompromising and determined young person, — with a temper!

We used to go quite often to that wonderful monument of architectural grace, the Milan Cathedral. To view it by moonlight was our great delight. In the interior our gaze always rested with horrible fascination on the statue of St. Bartholomew, bearing his flayed skin loosely swung over his shoulders, — a wondrous if somewhat grim work of art! When we were present at some religious function we were struck with surprise at hearing music of a character so different from what we expected. Instead of severe ecclesiastical music, our ears were greeted with familiar strains from Verdi's operas, — such as the Trio from "Ernani" and other selections equally secular and dramatic. Another thing that was borne in upon us was that although the priesthood was in evidence everywhere, there was so little apparent piety. Superstition, yes — there was plenty of that among the ignorant masses — but of any real religious feeling one remained unaware.

On one occasion we visited the Milan Conservatory of Music. San Giovanni, who was one of the principal teachers, wanted us to hear some of his pupils. We were also introduced to a number of the advanced scholars of the institution, — among others, to Arrigo Boito. As he impressed us then, there was nothing in his personality that suggested future eminence. On the contrary, his eagerness to impress us with the fact that he was entitled to much consideration, it being, as he assured us, "a very great and difficult thing to compose," had rather the effect of cheapening him in our estimation. Self-assertion did not seem to me to be in harmony with genius, on the principle that "good wine needs no bush!" Yet Boito certainly did make his mark in the world of music with his "Mefistofele," and the fact that Verdi did not disdain to collaborate with him in writing his "Otello" and "Falstaff" shows how easily we were prejudiced and how greatly we underestimated him.

Meanwhile our studies with San Giovanni progressed apace. If ardent, whole-souled devotion, if passionate zeal were all that was needed to attain perfection in art, I certainly deserved to obtain my heart's desire! But there are other things to be reckoned with besides. Health, strength, physical power of endurance and steady nerve must also take a big share in the quest. I was not favored in possessing all of these last essentials. My throat was weak and easily put out of gear; any excess in singing under the excitement of my lessons in opera interpretations generally resulted in a physical reaction almost amounting to collapse.

San Giovanni's accompaniments of the operas were masterly and brilliant. He had the faculty of reproducing orchestral effects on the piano and filling in the other parts, so that going through an opera with him was like a veritable opera rehearsal. He remembered all the most beautiful and effective embellishments and cadenzas of the great artists. He would say, "This is what Alboni did"; "Pasta phrased it thus," and so forth through the whole gamut of celebrities, till we, by virtue of his illustrations, could reproduce all and any of them without his suggestion, and apply the same type of embellishment whenever an occasion of a similar nature presented itself. He began to coach me in operas after three weeks' lessons with him, selecting those of a lighter character, such as "La Sonnambula," "I Puritani," "Lucia," "Rigoletto," "Faust," "Linda di Chamounix," "Don Pasquale," avoiding the heavier and more passionate rôles.

The state of exaltation reached by me when I satisfied myself in the lesson was unbounded. I always remained my own severest critic; therefore, when *I* was satisfied it meant that I was at my best, and San Giovanni's praise, which he always accorded me in full measure, was almost a superfluity, though it fell most pleasantly on my ear.

There is no ecstasy like that experienced at the sound of one's own voice when it fulfils one's ideal, as there is also no depression so profound as that induced by the loss of it, — even when one believes that loss to be only temporary! I was frequently and painfully subject to these fluctuations, and my alternate spells of ecstasy and misery cannot be gauged by any ordinary standard of human emotions. I was constantly seeking for a way to clinch my triumphant tone. The word which expressed it for me was "it." Yesterday "it" was mine, mine to keep forever, as it seemed; to-day "it" was gone, and I as helpless as the owner of a pet bird that had flown from its cage! In vain did I plead with my teacher for help. "If you only could give me some advice what to do, how to practise to get a permanent tone-emission! If you only would tell me why I have no voice — no breath — no anything to-day, when in the last lesson I had all of these and you were so pleased with me!

All I could expect from him was a kind, sympathetic smile, and "You are tired; you have been overdoing and have exhausted your vitality; stop singing for a few days, and you will find your voice again." He was invariably right; by the way, a good rest always did set things right! Still I was not satisfied. I ached to discover the why and wherefore of this tantalizing state of things. I went searching — searching — day after day. I shut myself in my little studio, trying every sort of experiment with my voice — all in vain, till I would bury my face in my hands on the keys of the piano in utter despair.

There my poor dear little mother would find me and in anxious tones say, "For God's sake, Clara, don't work so hard. Do you know you have been singing for four hours? You will kill yourself if you go on in that way!"

To which I would answer, sobbing, "Oh, I have lost my tone-emission; I have lost 'It.'"

Of such alternate agonies, defeats, and fits of exaltation were my student days in Milan made up!

Rosamond did not seem to have any of these terrible ups and downs. She studied her operas, progressed steadily, and never seemed to take things as seriously as I did. Both she and Mamma often wondered what I was making all that fuss about. They did not really understand the nature of my inmost strivings. "Why couldn't I be satisfied with the way things were going on? Why should I always be wanting something different? Was I not improving in my singing all the time? Was not San Giovanni more than satisfied?"

This was their constant refrain, which, however, did nothing towards bringing me comfort but only wearied me and caused me to withdraw more and more within myself. Whenever I happened to let myself go, in trying to give expression to some new idea, it was always followed by the remark in an aside from Mamma to Rosamond, "one of Clara's notions!"

It was quite evident that I was regarded in the family as a sort of freak, — much as a hen and her chicks might regard a duckling hatched in the same brood on its first splash into the water!

In December Papa came to Milan to spend his vacation with us, bringing with him Domenico, who had already got a firm footing as professor of music in Cheltenham, where he, Papa, and Aunt Mary made a comfortable home together. The twins, like ourselves, had learned to speak Italian fluently; they were also perfectly familiar with the Milanese dialect, which like all of the dialects has but little in common with Italian. It now became expedient to start their schooling, so after consulting our guardian, they were duly placed in a military school, where he said they would receive a much better general education than elsewhere.

Our family reunion was a happy one, and Papa was well satisfied with the progress we had made in our singing and with our promise for the future. The magnificence of the operatic representations at La Scala were a great delight to him, and the enthusiastic response of the audience, coupled with their discrimination, were a source of wonder to him after the unresponsive, decorous and not too discriminating audiences of good old England!

There was, however, a fearsome side to their ready demonstrativeness, as instanced when our famous English baritone, Santley, came to La Scala to try his fortune in Italian opera. (He made his début in Halévy's "Jewess.") We had become very friendly with him and his wife since the first days of their arrival at Milan, so we were naturally interested in his success, not only because he was a compatriot of whom we were proud, but also because of his genial disposition.

There entered also another element. The Italians were inclined to be rather contemptuous of English talent. According to them, the English could not sing; they were cold, stiff and unmusical; neither could they act nor pronounce Italian. We looked to Santley, therefore, to prove that they were mistaken. He was to redeem the musical reputation of our compatriots.

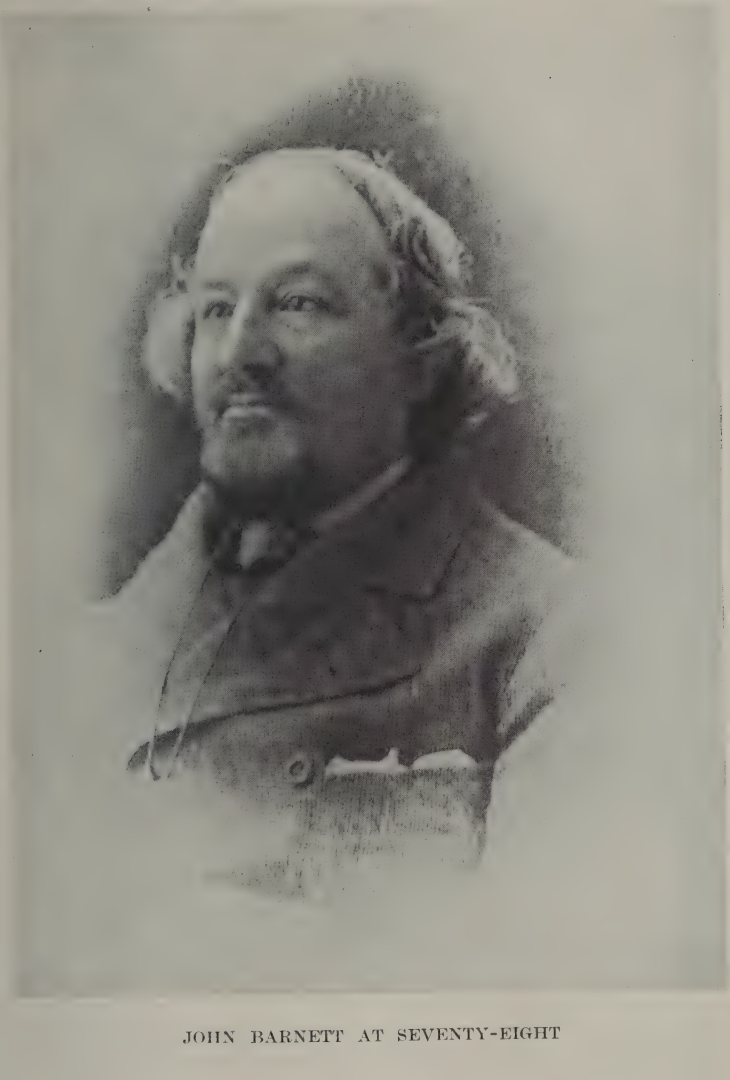
It happened, however, to Santley's undoing, that the tenor, Negrini, who had in two successive seasons received a perfect ovation at La Scala, on singing in London shortly after met with no success there whatever, was in fact regarded as a second-rate singer! This roused the indignation of the Milanese public, who took it as an insult to their judgment. So when Santley was announced to sing at La Scala, the general attitude, as reported to us by De Lorenzi, was, "Let the English look out lest we treat their favorite baritone Santley as they treated our Negrini. Now is our chance to get even with them!"

Thus the opera he was to appear in was a foreordained failure. When Santley appeared on the scene, however, his make-up and stage bearing were so artistic and his singing of the principal aria so admirable that there was no entering wedge for open disapproval; the only satisfaction they could take was in *not applaud-*

ing and by suppressing the natural demonstration of the unbiased remnants by a few ominous hisses. But when the prima donna made her appearance, they found a better opportunity for wrecking the opera. It had somehow leaked out that the lady was a protégée of one of the directors, who had managed to get for her an appearance at La Scala to serve his own purposes, although he knew very well that her reputation as an artist did not entitle her to such an honour. She had a good voice and was so beautiful to look at off the stage that it was thought she might pass muster, but somehow as she appeared on the stage she was not beautiful; her make-up was bad, her costume unbecoming and she toddled in without aplomb. The audience hardly waited for her to sing the first notes of her recitative, but began at once to shout "*Antipatica!*" During the whole of that first scene the poor thing struggled to go on with her part and make herself heard above the hisses and shouts of "*Basta, Basta*" (enough, enough). It was horrible! It was cruel! It was unjust; because they gave the poor woman no chance to show what she could do. They practically condemned her unheard because in the first place they were prejudiced, second they did not like her looks, third the opera was doomed to be a fiasco!

Thus they carried their point with respect to Santley; the opera in which he had appeared was hissed off the stage and shelved. "Let the English swallow that pill!" Negrini was avenged!

It was quite characteristic of the Italian spirit that when "Il Trovatore" was substituted for the discarded opera — as a makeshift, while another of the scheduled operas was being rehearsed — and Santley once more faced the public, he was generously applauded in "Il



JOHN BARNETT AT SEVENTY-EIGHT

Balen," though they refused to accept the scratch performance offered them as a whole. This was to show that aside from party feeling, they had nothing against Santley personally, and also that they knew a good thing when they heard it!

Another instance of the arbitrary disposition of an Italian audience was when the tenor Graziani was engaged for the winter season at La Scala, and it was rumored that he was to receive thirty thousand francs for his services, whereas it was known that Negrini was paid only twenty-five thousand. This concession of higher terms to Graziani than those accorded their favorite rankled — although his great reputation was supposed by the management to warrant it — and it had the effect of putting the audience into a defiant attitude towards the new star.

Graziani's first appearance was in Verdi's "Ballo in Maschera." Already his singing of the first tenor solo proclaimed him a finished artist with a voice of infinite beauty and grace of style, but there was a slight catch in his voice on one single high note toward the end of the song. The audience seized the opportunity to express its rancor by hisses followed by the loud cry — intended to be heard by all — "*Trenta mille franchi — e scrocca!*" (Thirty thousand francs and his voice cracks!) Graziani, with his sensitive artist's temperament, was overwhelmed! Unaccustomed to the ways of a La Scala audience, their attack robbed him of his confidence, with the result that he could not do himself justice during the rest of the opera. It was quite plain that the audience was determinedly protesting against him!

Now the rule in Italy was that even if an artist is hissed off the stage on the first night, he has a right to try his luck again in two successive nights, provided he has the courage to face the rampant audience again. But if on the third night the audience still protests, the contract with the manager is legally void; the artist is officially *protestato* and must retire, thus remaining without salary or engagement for that season, plus the stigma of *protestato* attached to his name.

Generally a singer accepts his dismissal after being hissed off once, but Graziani was advised by the impresario to risk it again, so confident was he that he could compel justice to be done to him in the long run by force of his art. So on the second night Graziani braced up and sang delightfully. A certain proportion of the just-minded public applauded loudly, but were hissed down by the opposing party, who still persisted in protesting out of sheer obstinacy and malice. Then the unprejudiced party took the bit in its teeth and determined on asserting itself. Having resolved to carry the day against the protestants, a large number of the very best people among the audience, including all the aristocracy of Milan, planned for his third appearance an uprising and powerful demonstration in favor of the victimized tenor. It happened accordingly that on the third night, as soon as Graziani appeared on the scene, he was received with cheers and deafening applause that smothered effectually the hisses of the opposing faction, which, finding itself outnumbered and outshouted, subsided for the rest of the evening. After that, the victorious tenor was permitted to sing through a successful season without further annoyance and to draw his much begrudged salary of thirty thousand francs without further protest!

The above anecdotes go to show that the mercurial temperament of an Italian audience does not always make for the inspiration and artistic stimulus of the singer, but only too often is the means of killing all courage and confidence, besides perhaps dooming to shame and disgrace some one who might, under more tender treatment, become a worthy exponent of his art. For instance, the cruel "fiasco" of the poor lady who sang with Santley was followed by an attack of brain fever, which after holding her for weeks in its grip, left her a complete wreck! And yet in her case there was undoubtedly good material to build on!

I have often been struck with the strong contrast between Italians *en masse* and Italians in general, as you get to know them individually. Massed together they are like impetuous, unreasoning children; the brute in them becomes prominent even to cruelty! But as we know them individually they are a most lovable people, — kind, generous and extraordinarily sympathetic. In both social and private intercourse their chief desire obviously is to make you feel pleased with yourself, not alone by constantly calling your attention to your own best points but also by showing that their interest in you is such as to impel them to make a close study of you. They want you to feel happy by showing that they admire, that they delight in you. This admirable trait is often unjustly mistaken by us Anglo-Saxons as empty flattery, because it happens to be flattering! I became quickly persuaded, however, that their so-called flattery was absolutely sincere as far as it went. If the stigma of insincerity is often attached to it, it is, I take it, simply because their admiration is not exclusive. One moment it is directed to you, the next it is aimed at another with equal impressiveness. Instead, however, of cheapening their expressions of admiration, it should, I think, rather enhance our own appreciation of their real amiability.

One really grows almost to love their frank way of turning themselves inside out — mentally, morally, and one might almost add physically — though one may easily feel a bit shocked at their expansiveness at first! Their idea that whatever is natural is something not to be ashamed of, not to be ignored, but to be discussed freely, is after all very sane! I only know that on my return to England after five years in Italy I felt most painfully the restraint put by convention on freedom of expression. It was like coming out of the sunny open into a cold, close, confined cave! How I missed being reminded of traits which to think of as mine was a joy! I began to lose confidence in myself, and I forgot to be happy! Life seemed dull and unprofitable for some time after my return to my own country. Surely the Latin race can boast a charm with which the Anglo-Saxon has not learned to conjure!

CHAPTER IV

CARNIVAL IN MILAN — A MASQUE BALL AT LA SCALA — KING VICTOR EMMANUEL — A SUMMER IN BERGAMO — AN OPERA BY FURRONI — AN INCORRIGIBLE AUDIENCE — ROMAN SNAILS — THE FILO DRAMATICO — SOCIAL STANDING OF SINGERS

THE Carnival of 1861 was the grandest and gayest there had been for many years. It was the first to be celebrated after the exodus of the Austrians from Lombardi and was to be an expression of all the wild joyousness of a people recently freed from a hated yoke. It would be almost impossible for an Anglo-Saxon to conceive of a scene of such riotous revelry, — such an abandon to every freakish manifestation of extravagant joy! Features such as gorgeous triumphal cars with rich trappings and groups representing the principal political figures and events of the times we are all more or less familiar with as characteristic of our own pageants, but the numberless ingenious devices of the foot-walking populace to excite merriment and laughter would be quite inconceivable! Here a couple dressed in gay rags of many colors, walking with mincing steps and affectedly aristocratic bearing, with the bare frame of a parasol or umbrella held ostentatiously over their heads; there a group made up as animals or birds of various kinds with artificial heads; here a pig, a cat, or dog, a bear, or an ostrich, each acting toward the other after his kind; men dressed as female *ballerine* with negligible concealment of their charms, and women dressed as men, behaving with all the boldness and license of the male sex in their cups. The cries, the shouts, the coarse innuendoes, the capers, the pelting of each other with *coriandoli*, the excited screams of wild delight formed a chaotic orgy which beggars description! All the populace seemed to have gone raving mad, or else to be intoxicated! It was impossible not to get into the spirit of that wild revelry to some extent, even from our balcony where we viewed the scene. The triumphal cars were provided with huge receptacles of *confetti*, which, in passing, they threw up to those of us on balconies and scattered among the motley crowd. There seemed to be no end to it all! It kept going on and on with unabated spirit from morning till night. We also had our little store of *coriandoli* and confections on our balcony, and took an active part in pelting the most choice groups with our harmless missiles.

There was also in those mad days preceding Lent a wonderful masque ball at La Scala. Our guardian thought it was an experience of Italian life that we should enjoy and that we ought to have. So we provided ourselves with masks and dominos and betook ourselves thither with him for our escort.

The whole auditorium and enormous stage were thrown into one, but so great was the concourse of people that there was none too much room for circulation. It was a great sight — that immense assembly — all of whom felt free to address any one, whether friend or stranger, and under disguise say anything and everything that they may have been longing to say for months but could not do for lack of opportunity. The license of speech at such a ball was unlimited. A beggar might whisper a word of warning in the ear of a prince; a political plot might be unfolded by a traitor; love intrigues, jealous revenges, insidious suggestions, — all could find expression; unholy suspicions could be roused and many a tragedy initiated; the fateful moment for many a lover and his mistress precipitated; all of this and more too, one could feel, as it were, vibrating in the atmosphere; it needed no powerful imagination to depict what was going on! Under the mask everything was permitted to be extraordinarily in evidence; you could intelligently follow the little game of each couple or group, — the mystery attached to their identity being the only restriction.

King Victor Emmanuel was present, — undisguised, of course. He stood in the middle of the floor, staring apparently at nothing in particular with his large, black, rather bulging eyes, obviously conscious that he was a centre of attraction and receiving most graciously the respectful salutations of those who succeeded in approaching him.

The whole scene had for me a tremendous fascination! It was, as it were, an epitome of all the romance, the tragedy, and the comedy of life. We could hardly allow ourselves to be dragged away in the small hours of the morning when De Lorenzi thought it was high time for us to go home.

In June, when we were wilting from the effects of a month of enervating heat, Papa, who had joined us again, took us all — including the twins — to Bergamo, thirty-two miles from Milan, for the refreshment of mountain air. Our abode there was not far enough from the little town to make it difficult to attend the opera from time to time. Bergamo had its operatic traditions, being the birthplace of Donizetti, so of course there was a fine large opera house there, always provided with an excellent company during the summer season.

A new opera by a certain Furroni — a native of Bergamo — was brought out there. The prima donna, Madame Palmieri, was an Englishwoman well seasoned by her experience in Italian operatic life and a good artist. The opera was well received, and the audience seemed kindly disposed toward their fellow townsman. But even their friendliness did not prevent them from indulging in a characteristically rude manifestation of the musical intelligence which they regarded as a birthright not to be sold for a mess of friendship! There was in the opera an oft-repeated theme suggestive of one of the principal themes in the "Trovatore"; in fact, the two first bars were identical, though the theme was slightly differentiated as it went on. On its third recurrence the audience, no longer able to restrain the impulse to show that nothing could escape them, joined in with voices unsubdued, continuing to sing the theme as it exists in the "Trovatore," while the orchestra continued to play Furroni's version. Whether the composer was more mortified than amused at the exposure of his perhaps innocent plagiarism I cannot say, but certainly the audience had the satisfaction of manifesting its musical perception, if at the cost of good manners and courtesy to a fellow townsman!

On our return to Milan we took up our studies with fresh vigour. San Giovanni, who had also taken a short vacation at Bergamo, timing it so as to be present at the performances of his friend Furroni's opera, had likewise renewed his waning energy in the mountain air. It is worth recalling that in all the time we spent in Milan we never missed but one lesson, and that was when San Giovanni had to excuse himself on account of an upset resulting from an indigestible repast. He confessed to having eaten thirty *Lumache* fried in oil, which were delectable but deadly. The *Lumache* in question were a variety of very large, fat, gray snails of ancient origin, greatly prized as an article of food by the ancient Romans and still to be found among Roman remains. His description of his uncanny meal filled us with repulsion. I hated to look at him as long as the impression lasted. I could hardly have felt more horrified had he owned up to cannibalism!

There existed in Milan, and perhaps may still exist, a little theatre liberally endowed called Il Filo Dramatico, the purpose of which was to afford to talented aspirants an opportunity to test their powers on the stage before risking an appearance in public, the audience being selected and the press excluded. Many famous artists had in their day and generation tentatively and tremblingly trodden its boards. Amongst others, the celebrated Pasta tried her prentice hand there, and San Giovanni told us how she had failed entirely to make her voice effective on the occasion! Her teacher Nava, disappointed and angry at the result, went to her after the performance and said, "Giuditta, you would better go learn to knit stockings; you will never make a singer!"

This was not the only time that a great master proved to be mistaken in his judgment; there was Garcia, who on a first hearing of Jenny Lind in Paris made an equally discouraging pronouncement!

San Giovanni was anxious to get us a "hearing at the Filo Dramatico" by way of experiment. As we had only studied with him for a year, it was not easy to obtain. Influence was needed to secure a privilege clamored for by so many young artists. However, it was managed somehow, and we were allowed to give the last scene from Bellini's "Romeo and Giulliet." Rosamond, who was Romeo, had of course the principal part, a long recitative and aria sung in agony over my silent tomb, while on my awakening the subsequent wailing in grave clothes was of but brief duration.

Though we acquitted ourselves respectably, it was not what one could call a brilliant début! Rosamond, from whom so much was to be expected, in her inexperience allowed herself to be carried away by the dramatic situation to the extent that her intense emotion took charge of her voice. She had yet to learn that her voice should instead take charge of her emotions! Her voice accordingly sounded somewhat muffled and ineffective. San Giovanni, however, although in his heart, perhaps, a bit disappointed, was far from subjecting her to the discouragement that Nava had given to Pasta in the old days. It was to us a useful experiment, considered as an eye-opener, if nothing more.

I once asked De Lorenzi whether the singers at La Scala were sought after in social circles. His answer was in the negative.

"Why not?" I asked.

His reply was, "Because such a large proportion of our singers are of low origin and quite ignorant. Here any one who happens to have a good voice is taken in hand by some operatic agent; a contract is signed by the parents, by which the agent or impresario agrees to furnish both instruction in singing and maintenance for a given period, — say, six or seven years. As soon as the singer has been coached in a few operas she is launched on the stage in some second or third-rate theatre to try her prentice hand and gain experience, and whatever salary she receives goes into the pocket of the agent or impresario until the period of the contract comes to an end. He generally sees to it that the course of coaching is made as brief as possible, in order that the earnings of the singer may quickly reimburse him for his output. Thus, large numbers of crude prima donnas, who know nothing of music, who have received little or no education, and who have but too often not been well brought up or furnished with any moral standard, are precipitated into the operatic field to glean what they can for themselves. If they happen to be good-looking and ambitious they generally find a 'protector' who furthers their ambition in whatever direction it may lie, — at the expense of their good name! It often happens that among these unfortunates a fine voice, musical aptness and dramatic instinct are to be found. In such cases, by means of the 'protector' (who is often the impresario himself) better instruction and other material advantages are furnished which may lead the singer eventually to fame. Thus, at La Scala we may be applauding the daughter of a cobbler who has sold his child to the highest bidder; we may rave over her as an artist, but it would never occur to us to introduce her into society."

Under the circumstances it is after all not to be wondered at that the genus Opera Singer should be regarded by the élite as something not to be reckoned with socially, and that although there doubtless were in Italy many singers of a much higher type, whose presence might well have graced the salons of the nobility as in Germany, they were all classed together and no exceptions made, much in the same way that it would not occur to us to invite even the most famous of circus riders to our parties.

I do not think that this attitude should be attributed to snobbishness; such exclusiveness belongs rather to a peculiar sense of the eternal fitness of things! Later, after being thrown in contact on the operatic stage with all kinds of artists, this exclusiveness seemed to me on the whole a wise dispensation, for even we, without any aristocratic pretensions, could not bring ourselves to associate with the rank and file of our fellow artists, though happily in almost every company we were able to find at least one or more with whom we could and did make excellent friends.

CHAPTER V

DÉBUT AT TURIN — "ROBERTO IL DIAVOLO" — CHANGE OF NAME — EXPERIENCE AT REHEARSALS — NEW SENSATIONS — A TRAGIC MOMENT — GLIMMERINGS OF HOPE — RECUPERATION

AFTER pursuing our studies with San Giovanni for a year and a half — Rosamond serenely and happily; I passionately, and with my accustomed alternating fits of exaltation and despair — something quite unexpected happened. As San Giovanni rose from the piano at the end of the lesson in which we had been through Donizetti's opera "Linda di Chamounix," and in which Rosamond had taken the contralto part, he said suddenly, "I want you to make your début on the operatic stage now — at once!" We both of us started and stared at him in utter amazement.

"You surely do not mean it!" I exclaimed. "We came to Milan with the idea of studying at least three years before attempting a début!"

"I do indeed mean it," he replied; "the fact is, there is nothing more I can teach you! You have become thoroughly imbued with all our Italian traditions; you anticipate everything I have to say about 'nuances.' You make your own embellishments and cadenzas, and I could suggest nothing better. Thus you have grown to be independent of me. You surely must be aware that all I now do is play your accompaniments!"

There was no regret or pique in his tone; on the contrary he said it as if he felt proud to have completed his job so promptly! Then, seeing our dazed expression, for we must have showed very plainly that it was hard for us to understand this sudden determination for which we were so unprepared, he continued:

"I do not mean, when I say there is nothing more I can teach you, that you have nothing more to learn. That would be absurd! But what I do mean is that what still remains for you to master can only come to you on the stage itself. Singing in a large auditorium is very different from singing in a room, and nothing but the actual experience of it can avail you. You must get that experience and the sooner the better! I shall bring an operatic agent to hear you sing to-morrow; I think he will not hesitate to give you an engagement."

The morrow came, and with it the agent. He was pleased with us and asked San Giovanni at once if I had studied the rôle of the Princess Isabella in "Roberto il Diavolo." That he was wanting some one who could sing that part for a company he was forming for Turin, where the opera was to be given for the *Quaresima* (Lent) season. San Giovanni said that I had not studied it, but that it would take only a few days for me to prepare it. "It is a very difficult coloratura part, as you know," quoth the agent, to which San Giovanni replied with a laugh, disclosing his two rows of little white teeth, "That does not alarm us; she has a flute in her throat!"

So the contract was signed, and our little household was to shift its quarters in two weeks to the Piedmontese capital. It was unfortunate and a great disappointment to us that Rosamond could not be engaged also, for we had hoped to make our début together. But there was no contralto part in "Roberto il Diavolo," so she was doomed to remain *a spasso* (which means, literally translated, "walking about," or in slang "kicking her heels"). When I demurred at accepting an engagement which left her out in the cold, San Giovanni said I should have to make up my mind for that same thing to happen quite frequently in our career, as there would be many operas for me to sing in which there was no contralto part, and it would never do for me to refuse engagements because they did not include Rosamond. She would get her opportunities from time to time to sing in operas with me, but as our maternal chaperone could not divide herself in halves, so as to permit Rosamond to sing in a theatre apart from me, she would inevitably have to take what she could get unless she should happen to make such a hit in some part that she might be offered an engagement independently of me, in which case the tables would be turned, and *I* should be the one to remain *a spasso!*

The next thing to be done was to decide on an Italian name, for, as San Giovanni said, it would never do for the public to suspect that we were English, or we should be classed at once with the tribe of semi-amateurs who swarm in Italy and pay large sums to impresarios for the privilege of making a début in opera. As such appearances nearly always end in disaster, the name of Barnett on the bill would pre-doom us to a bad reception! As it was, they would never guess from hearing us either speak or sing that we were not Italian, and should they discover our nationality after we had once made our mark, it would not matter.

"What name shall we take, then?" we asked.

"Why not *my* name?" he replied; "there would be a certain fitness in bearing the name of your teacher."

But somehow we did not fancy the name of San

Giovanni. It was too long, and we did not want to write ourselves down as Saint anything! So we decided on the name of Doria, which we had come upon in reading Bulwer's "Rienzi." San Giovanni approved it as being short, distinguished, and not likely to be mispronounced in foreign countries. (Little did I think at that time that I should live to hear myself addressed as "Miss Doriyer" when touring in America!) So that matter was settled; I was to be billed as Clara Doria, and from that time, when engaged together, Rosamond and I were known as "Le Sorelle Doria."

Although I had studied my part carefully with San Giovanni, who had put his seal of approval on it, and although I knew it thoroughly, still I was not satisfied that I might not miss some of the cues on the stage, with the confusion of chorus, orchestra and all the responses of smaller parts, — for that is the one thing a novice on the stage always dreads. So I took my opera score along with me in the railway carriage, hugging it and poring over it during the whole journey from Milan to Turin. I soon learned, however, how superfluous were my misgivings and how naturally one falls into the swing of it all on the stage.

The Theatre Committee had engaged an apartment for us, and the day after our arrival I was called to rehearsal. It was the custom in Italy for the whole company to get together in the foyer of the theatre for rehearsal at pianoforte twice a day for at least a week before rehearsing with the orchestra, to insure a perfect "ensemble" of the parts, and then five or six days more were spent in rehearsing on the stage with orchestra. Certainly the result more than fully justified the means, for I have never heard such perfect performances as those in Italy undertaken under such conditions!

Everything connected with those first days of my operatic career has remained indelibly impressed on my memory: the expression of surprise on the faces of my fellow artists when I was introduced to them as "our Principessa Isabella," — a surprise, as I afterwards learned, at my extremely youthful appearance. (I was at that time not yet eighteen.) The others were all mature artists of much experience and high reputation, and I suppose they must have wondered what I was to do *dans cette galère.* The acoustics of the room in which we rehearsed favored my voice immensely, for I can recall even now the thrill of joy that I experienced at the sound of my own voice in those high flights of coloratura in which the part of Isabella abounds. That the Director and all my companions were greatly impressed — even astonished at what they heard — was quite obvious, and indeed would have been so to the most modest of creatures!

I can say with perfect honesty that I was never conceited, whatever my other faults may have been; on the contrary, I rather leaned toward a painful habit of self-detraction — the result doubtless of my bringing up in a pessimistic atmosphere — so that the cause for the extraordinary elation I felt at my own achievements and the effect produced thereby must have been something very real.

After each rehearsal my fellow artists sidled up to me and made much of me, and our Director brought people with him to the rehearsals; there were whisperings, noddings of the head with significant looks towards me which I did not fail to observe. Altogether I was the happiest creature on this earth! Happy almost to intoxication! I loved every one in the company, and I wondered how it ever could have been said that artists were nasty towards each other; that they were subject to petty jealousies and such things! They were all so kind, so sympathetic in their interest at my success. Little did they think to what a soul's tragedy they were innocently preparing the way!

The "ensemble" once perfected, we were promoted to the stage to rehearse with the orchestra. On the morning of our first stage rehearsal, I said to my mother, "I want you to sit in a box at the further end of the auditorium opposite the stage to judge how my voice carries!" Accordingly she and Rosamond took up their station there.

When my turn came to sing my first aria I experienced a sensation so utterly different from that when at the pianoforte that I was bewildered. My voice seemed to be lost in space; all the glint of the tone and the ripple of the roulades seemed to have departed; I could not find them! I could not find myself! It was a moment of supreme — of intense — agony! I began to exert myself as I had never even dreamed of doing before; to pump up breath, to harden at the throat, thinking by muscular force to throw out the voice which seemed so confined. Then came the comforting thought that perhaps the quality of tone which so satisfied me in a room was really going out into the auditorium instead, and that perhaps that was the way it had to be when one was singing in a large theatre.

But there were no murmurs of applause from my companions, — no spontaneous "bravas" from the conductor after my numbers, and when the rehearsal was over, the rest of the company, instead of gathering around me with congratulations, as they had done at the rehearsals in the foyer, talked together apart in groups and left me standing alone. A great sense of misery seized on me; I felt like a lost soul! I knew intuitively that they were disappointed in me. I was disappointed in myself, — deathly disappointed! But *why* was it? What was the matter?

Then came Mamma on the stage to take me home; Rosamond was with her. They both had a serious, anxious look on their faces, but said nothing.

"Mamma, tell me, how did my voice sound in the theatre?" I asked falteringly.

"My dear, why didn't you sing out; why did you keep your voice back? I could hardly hear you part of the time!"

At this I broke down. "Mamma," I cried, with a sob, "I was singing out with all my might! It means that I do not know how to sing in a big place; that my voice is no good except in a room! Now I know what San Giovanni meant when he said there were things he could not teach me — that I could only learn by experience on the stage! Here I am on the stage and good for nothing! I must begin all over again and learn the A. B. C. of tone production!" This was the most tragic moment of my life! I cannot recall it even now without a deadly sinking at the heart.

When I reached home I shut myself in my room, threw myself on the bed and wept bitterly. Then came the reaction. I must gather myself together; I must work it out somehow; I would never rest till I had found out how to make myself heard. I thought of some experiments I would try. There are, alas! so many different ways in which one can emit voice! I would try all, one after the other.

The second rehearsal took place in the evening. I summoned up courage to try to get at the truth from some of the company. They were kind, but patronizing. My day of triumph was over! They said I should get used to the theatre in a little while — that I was not to feel discouraged — that "one must have experience!" But not one of them could tell me what to do to get the tone that would carry. Well, I must rely on myself! I must listen more attentively, more analytically, to the best of the voices; — they all had fine big voices which seemed to return to the stage after traveling round the house! I found myself envying a common chorus singer, who had a few notes of solo, because her coarse, rough voice could at least be heard!

To make a long story short, I braced up, set my teeth, and made the best of my opportunities during the six days of rehearsing twice a day, with the result that my voice was beginning to carry fairly well, — but the spontaneity, the joy of singing, were not what they had been. I understood vaguely, however, that I had to go through a purgatory of self-consciousness before coming to my heavenly possession again.

CHAPTER VI

OPERA NIGHTMARES — AN INDULGENT PUBLIC — PROGRESS — ENGAGEMENT AT GENOA — PALAZZO PICCASSO — SUCCESS — THE DE LORENZIS OUR GUESTS — A DEVOTED FACTOTUM

DURING those last few nights before the season opened my sleep was constantly disturbed by horrible nightmares which visioned my début under the most distressing circumstances. For instance, in my dressing-room the hair-dresser would be fumbling round in my thick mop of hair, trying in vain to bind it into the regulation style for the rôle of the Princess, when the voice of the call boy would ring out with "*tocc' a lei, Signorina*" (it is your turn) and I, tearing myself away from the bungling barber at cost of leaving my scalp behind me, would rush on to the stage in a dishevelled condition, arrayed in only a petticoat, but just in time to pick up my cue. Then came murmurs of surprise and disgust from the public which rose to such a pitch that I awoke, starting up in my bed with the agony of shame still hanging over me! This sort of nightmare pursued me night after night, with modifications; sometimes my regal robes refused to get fastened when the call came, and again, on attaching the long heavy train of red velvet, bordered with broad bands of ermine, to my shoulders, the whole corsage was dragged down with its weight, leaving my back bare to the waist, provoking hootings and jeers from the public!

When it came to the dress rehearsal, however, things went pretty smoothly all along the line, but it actually occurred that while on the stage my heavy velvet train dragged on the shoulders to such an extent that there was a far more liberal display of my person than was either intended or proper. Fortunately, however, it was only at the dress rehearsal!

My performance was regarded on the whole as satisfactory, and no misgivings as to my reception by the audience seemed to prevail. This comforted me, and now that the die was cast and I had done all that I knew how to fit myself for my task, I put myself into the hands of fate, prepared to take what might come, — whatever it might be. On the night of the first performance, taking warning from my nightmares, I was careful to hie myself betimes to my dressing-room, to get out of the hands of the hairdresser and be arrayed in my regal robes before the orchestra had finished tuning up. When the call came, "*tocc' a lei, Signorina*," I was quite calm and composed, for the Law of Necessity was upon me! I was no longer Clara Doria, the timid débutante, but the Princess Isabella, and I must at all costs sustain the dignity of the rôle! Once on the stage before the footlights, I felt no fear; I had no thought of the public but was wholly absorbed in my part.

The opera was a success, which it well deserved to be, for it was a fine performance. All the artists were good, all were well tried and of established reputation with the exception of myself, and I, at least, did not mar the performance, though I may not have contributed in great measure to its brilliancy. The public seemed to like me, however, and although the verdict went forth "*ha poca voce*" (she has not much voice), it was always followed with "*ma canta assai bene*" (but she sings well). Then I suppose they felt my youth and liked the "cut of my jib" — all of which helped to make me hold my own throughout the engagement and thus constantly gain stage experience by singing every night during the whole of Lent, except on Fridays; for "Roberto il Diavolo" held the stage during the entire season. It was a happy coincidence that my début was made in an opera by Meyerbeer, — one of the family, so to speak!

Before we left Torino I was offered an engagement at Genoa for the ensuing season, to take the part of the Page in Verdi's "Ballo in Maschera" and to play Adalgisa in Bellini's "Norma." I accepted it with alacrity because in the "Ballo in Maschera" there was a contralto part for Rosamond, namely that of the *Strega* (Witch) well suited to her voice and dramatic power, though not in any sense an effective part. But the point was that she was not again to be kept off the stage on my account! I hated the thought that her career should be sacrificed to mine because our family could not be divided. Accordingly it was with great satisfaction that I read in the theatrical column of the newspapers that the "Sorelle Doria" had been engaged for a season of three summer months at Genoa.

Genoa afforded us a strong contrast to Turin, the latter being immaculately clean and singularly free from any signs of antiquity or decay. There the porticoed sidewalks of some of the principal streets furnished a most grateful protection, both from the rays of the sun and from the rain, whereas Genoa, in spite of its wealth of magnificent palaces and its picturesque elevation, was not alluring to the wayfarer in the heat of the burning sun with its cobbled and hilly streets.

One striking feature of Genoa was its numerous roof-gardens resplendent with luxuriant blossoming plants. These were a delight to the eye, as they were never planted too high to be above the range of vision of those passing on the streets.

It was very hot, so we were not tempted to move about much, except to go back and forth to rehearsals, and we were glad to adopt as headgear the *pezzotto* worn by the natives, which consisted of a long, flowing, thin, white muslin scarf, arranged something after the style of the Spanish mantilla. As long as we remained in the spacious marble halls of our apartment we kept very cool and comfortable.

And what a wonderful dwelling house it was! We had never inhabited anything so palatial before! It was a suite of very large, high-studded rooms, — the floors inlaid with really fine mosaics in beautiful designs. The broad inner staircase was of the finest Carrara marble, the newel post and banisters carved in artistic designs. Palazzo Piccasso, by which name it was known, enclosed three sides of an attractive court. Our suite occupied one whole side, up one flight, while the owner, Count Piccasso, inhabited the wing on the opposite side of the court. He was a tall, dark, rather ascetic-looking person of about forty, who had a harmless taste for painting and who spent much of his time in his studio. As presumably the bulk of his property was vested in the Palazzo, plus a country estate, he was glad to turn it to advantage by renting some of its beautiful suites. We considered ourselves in great luck to get one of them at a price we could afford; though how it happened I no longer remember. We saw but little of our noble landlord, though he did not fail to call on us. He even made an attempt to paint my portrait, but as I could not give him the necessary sittings, I doubt if it turned out very well. I never had the curiosity to find out about it, for the truth is I was so absorbed in my singing that the ordinary occurrences of life were matters of indifference to me. The overtures of friendship, the little amenities of social life, the thousand and one little things so significant and so exciting to the average young girl never enchained my attention; they all passed over me in a dreamy unreal sort of way.

We had been enjoined not to encourage visitors by De Lorenzi, who, before we started on our careers, pointed out to us the dangers and pitfalls of a singer's life. He succeeded in alarming Mamma to the extent of making her very timid and very mistrustful of every masculine who approached us. So that when any one of the more congenial of our fellow artists came to see us — perhaps bringing some friends who wished to be introduced — they were never asked to call again. This decree, while it fretted poor Rosamond's expansive nature, suited me well enough because of my absorption in the perpetual quest for that ideal tone which was not yet mine to keep. In spite of my indifference to people, however, I had no objection to having admirers as long as they demanded no response from me. To accept homage passively was all I was willing to do. It had no real value for me as an artist because my intuitions warned me that the personal element entered into their demonstrations more than artistic appreciation. How I longed for some one who could enter into my aspirations, — who could understand the nature of my quest! But no such person came my way! All that my admirers seemed to understand was the triumph of "making a hit," of being a favorite with the public; success, prestige, that was as far as their visions reached. But I in my heart of hearts knew very well that one could make a hit without having attained one's ideal of "Art by control," and that was precisely what had happened to me in Genoa! I was much lauded and applauded in the "Ballo in Maschera" because the part of the Page happened to lie in the upper register, where my voice was naturally at its best for brilliancy and carrying power, and also because I looked the part to the satisfaction of the public. It was all well enough as far as it went! I was pleased! I liked to hear my praises sung, for even to be thought worth flattering was something that counted! But after all, none of it mattered much. One moment of conscious achievement was worth all the rest! And there were actually such moments at times, especially in the part of Adalgisa; I felt that I was growing, steadily growing. Rosamond also won much praise in the part of the Witch, which she both sang and acted admirably, and since the rôle offered no chance for the assertion of any personal charm, artistic credit in her case was unalloyed.

De Lorenzi wrote us of his eagerness to hear us sing on the stage and proposed to come to Genoa for a month or so with his wife for a summer outing, whereupon Mamma put at their disposal one of our spacious rooms which he and his Ercolina gladly accepted, with the proviso that they should cater for themselves outside, as Mamma would not undertake the responsibility of feeding a pair of such dyed-in-the-wool Italians. So their presence in our ménage was no disturbance to us, for we saw but little of them. They wandered about the town at their own sweet will, disporting themselves in the cafés and strolling along the shore, inviting the reluctant sea breezes.

By some good fortune Mamma was spared all the trouble of providing for our little household by an angelic creature named Pasquale, who from the first constituted himself our right-hand man. He was a man of about forty, highly educated, and engaged in literary pursuits. Just why he attached himself to us, doing all our marketing and attending to all our affairs for us on the plea that the Genoese dialect was impossible for any of us to grapple with, we did not know. We could only account for it on the score of kindliness and a great desire to be helpful, for apparently he had no ulterior motive in serving us. Although we suspected that he possessed no superfluity of this world's goods he certainly never made known to us his needs, and if he hoped for some voluntary remuneration from us for his services, he never as much as hinted at it. Indeed we would gladly have rewarded him for all the time and trouble spent on our affairs, but something in his attitude, which savored of a purely chivalrous devotion, prevented us from broaching the subject. It was not until, on leaving Genoa, we reached the station, where he awaited us after attending to our luggage, that Mamma summoned up courage to put into his hand an envelope containing a nice little sum of money, with a grateful letter so worded that the most sensitive pride could not take exception to the gift. We three had laid our heads together for its careful wording, and I had put it into my best Italian. We never saw Pasquale again after parting with him at Genoa, and strange to say, nothing has ever recalled him to me but the writing of these memories. The realization of my forgetfulness, as I think of it, overwhelms me with a poignant sense of ingratitude!

CHAPTER VII

ENGAGEMENT AT LEGHORN — INTERVAL AT MILAN — MEYERBEER'S "L'AFRICAINE" — A NEW TEACHER — BRUNI — LEGHORN EXPERIENCES — CHOSEN FRIENDS — A NOTORIOUS ROUÉ — PROTECTED BY FRIENDS — "THE FORUM" — FINE ITALIAN TRAITS — POETIC EFFUSIONS — SUCCESS IN "I PURITANI" — REËNGAGED FOR LENT

THE next engagement offered us was one in the city of Livorno (Leghorn), the principal seaport of Tuscany. Our first appearance was again to be in the "Ballo in Maschera," and for me later perhaps Bellini's "I Puritani." In addition to the sum offered us for the winter season — which, as compared with the salaries received in our own country to-day was a modest one — we were promised a benefit. This method of piecing out the remuneration for services was adopted widely in Italy at that time and was as a rule willingly accepted by artists, for when the singer was a favorite with the public there was sure to be a full house and a goodly sum realized. But on the other hand, if it so happened that the current opera was not attracting good audiences, there was but little chance of making anything out of it after expenses were paid. So the "benefit" was liable to be something of a gamble, after all!

The interim of about a month or more between the end of our Genoa engagement and that at Leghorn we spent in Milan, during which time we renewed our pleasant early evening walks and occasional day excursions with our guardian. I love to recall those long tramps outside the city gates (of which there was a choice of ten) when we used to stop at some little country café-garden and refresh ourselves with the thin white wine of the country, which went by the name of Vinetto. An excursion to Lake Como was one of particularly grateful memory, for De Lorenzi was in a position to obtain entrance for us to a number of the beautiful and lordly villas not usually open to strangers, with which the borders of the lake are studded, and as I have already indicated, singers had not opportunity in those days of becoming familiar with the interiors of private dwellings.

But as far as city residences were concerned, one did not lose much by being excluded from them. It would indeed have been to us a matter of surprise to find so little in them worth seeing, for in Italy it mattered little where anybody lived or what kind of apartment they had, as long as they had their box at the opera and their equipage on the Corso, for it was customary for the élite to receive their friends in their opera boxes and on the Corso, where they frequently descended from their carriages to stroll about under the trees for a quiet conversation with some favored companion. King Victor Emanuel and his son Umberto were often to be seen in their midst, and I used to think how tired he must be of perpetually answering the salutations of his subjects!

We did not indulge wholly in pastimes during our vacation, however; we took the opportunity of enlarging our repertory. Meyerbeer's latest opera, "L'Africaine," had just been produced for the first time in Italy and was making a great sensation. I procured a score and proceeded to go through it with San Giovanni.

We found several of our old friends and fellow students in Milan, who like ourselves were awaiting the time of their next engagement. There was the tenor Barbacini who sang with us in Genoa, a genial, happy-go-lucky creature with a contrasting wife who took life seriously, and also our old friend Morgan. He held forth enthusiastically in praise of a certain teacher of singing named Bruni who had recently come to settle in Milan, declaring most emphatically that Bruni knew more about tone production than all the other teachers put together. At this I pricked up my ears, resolving at once to find out if I could get from him the great secret of a permanent working system for my Ideal Tone.

When at my request Bruni presented himself at our apartment his eagerness to begin work with me seemed to promise that he really had something to impart that was worth while! Bruni was no musician, nor had he as a singer ever risen beyond second tenor parts in opera companies, but he, like myself, had become a crank on the subject of tone production and had for some time given his whole mind to it. Mamma engaged him to come three times a week. He refused to accept any money for his services; he would only accept a present from us, he added shyly, if we felt disposed to offer it. I satisfied myself very soon that he had the right idea of tone and that he was ardently seeking to clinch it; but he knew no more about giving directions how to obtain it than any one else! When, as often occurred, I momentarily fulfilled my own ideal, he had a way of jumping out of his chair and crying out "*Ecco!*" in a state of breathless excitement. But *I* knew the tone I had given was "It" without the telling, so that in the long run my seances with Bruni, while they were both inspiring and exciting, were not much more fruitful than practising by myself would have been.

On his last visit before our departure, Mamma, who never consented to accept any professional service without paying for it in a self-respecting way, after calculating the number of lessons on a basis of San Giovanni's terms, handed him the amount in the form of a present, as he preferred to have it. Poor little Bruni turned all the colours of the rainbow, bowing to the ground in his gratitude. We discovered afterwards through Morgan that we had paid him just double the terms he was in the habit of receiving. No wonder he blushed!

Our experiences at Leghorn were in many ways different from those at either Turin or Genoa. To begin with, there was a double company, which gave the members of each several nights off in the week for recuperation. We opened with the "Ballo in Maschera" which was, as at Genoa, a great success. It drew so well that the second company had to wait before appearing. This led to some jealousies and ill feeling on the part of the other set, of which we for our part took no notice. The members of neither company were of "our sort" and we saw nothing of them outside of the theater.

The director of the orchestra, Gianelli, became our stanch friend. He was a frank, whole-souled, genial person, and a most excellent musician. Mamma felt quite secure in admitting him to our friendship. When he asked permission to make us acquainted with certain intimate friends of his, who he said were intellectual men with serious views, artistic taste, and without a trace of the "gay Lothario" in their composition, Mamma relaxed her strict rule to keep the male sex at bay, and they were permitted to come to the house on "off nights." They never failed to do so, protesting that the second company at the opera had no attraction for them. I think that Mamma's concession was in a measure due to Rosamond's bitter complaints at being deprived of all social life. It was a source of great discontent to her, with her sympathetic and expansive nature, and the wonder is that she never kicked over the traces! Perhaps my own attitude of willing submission to the maternal decree influenced her in a way and had the effect of tempering her rebellious spirit.

As soon as our little group of friends realized that our views of life were not those of the average opera singer, and that stage morals, or rather immorals, were not in our programme, they became our devoted cavaliers, constituting themselves a sort of protective guard or vigilance committee. They warned us against dangerous people and saw to it that we were not molested by the usual dissolute hangers-on of theaters. This was good service that they rendered us, for there certainly were pitfalls of which we needed to be made aware! For instance, there was in Leghorn a man of great influence and wealth who, it was said, had it in his power either to make or to mar the reputation of an artist and whose boast it was that he had been *intimate* with every prima donna who had sung in Leghorn since he had come to man's estate, — their possession being to him much the same matter of pride as are scalps to the Indian! According to all accounts he was a regular Don Juan; although as he appeared at the opera in the stage box which he always occupied, he presented the appearance of an exceedingly decorous, handsome and dignified gentleman.

The fact that magnificent floral pieces were handed to me from his box from time to time would have had no particular significance for me, — that being a recognized tribute of legitimate appreciation of an artist, but it might of course easily have led to a personal acquaintance and whatever might follow, had our friends not promptly explained Il Signore Veroniani (I am interpolating another name!) to us and put us on our guard. They realized that while his friendship in itself alone would be a positive menace to our reputation, it would also be fatal to our success to make an open enemy of him by snubbing him, as I should have to do if he pressed his attentions. It was a dilemma that had therefore to be handled very carefully. Our friends were indefatigable in obstructing his plans and most ingenious in rendering abortive his efforts to be introduced to us, to which end he had appealed to each of them in turn.

How to dodge cleverly the advances of Veroniani without giving direct offence became quite an interesting trick-game amongst us. The harder he tried to gain his point the more obstacles were put in his way, and the more he was baffled the more determined he was to reach the unattainable, as is the wont of men of his type! Our task was therefore not an easy one, but we managed nevertheless during that season to keep the insidious Veroniani at bay without making an enemy of him, which was really a triumph of diplomacy! I doubt, however, if he ever gave up the hope that his hour of triumph would come!

Toward the end of the season, after a prolonged run of the "Ballo in Maschera," I had my chance to sing

"I Puritani," which meant a great deal to me, as it was peculiarly well suited to my voice and also because it seemed to break the spell of being perpetually billed for the "Ballo." It was a success and therefore it was a pity it was not staged earlier in the season!

The evenings spent on our "off" nights in our modest little *salon* with our literary friends were not only delightful, but also stimulating. There were discussions on art, literature, and music. They had their Dante by heart like all Tuscans of that day, including even the half educated. The spirits of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio seemed to be still moving about in their midst as intimates. It was really a liberal education to hear their intelligent analyses of certain of the more obscure Cantos. They also discussed freely our own performances at the opera, showing as in a mirror the effect of this or that — perhaps unconcious — nuance or gesture. Such discussions were both inspiring and helpful in giving us confidence in ourselves. Toward the end of the evening they generally burst into poetry, with that really remarkable faculty for improvisation which so many of their kind seemed to possess.

Acrostics on both our individual and joint names were a favorite form of improvisation, — our particular traits being mostly the subject of such effusions! Rosamond and I acted as amanuenses, and it was wonderful what an accumulation of these acrostics we had by the time we left Leghorn! Many of them were charming, too, for amongst our friends there were several with a true poetic vein, one of them, named Braccio Bracci, being well known throughout Tuscany as a poet of distinction.

Our little *salon* went, among our friends, by the name of " Il Foro " (the Forum). When any of them came on the stage to greet us after a performance, it was always, "To-morrow we meet at 'Il Foro.'" They were pleasant times, those! Our intercourse was so frank, so sympathetic and so sane! Never was there a word or look that might not have passed between brothers and sisters, only there was a greater deference in their bearing than one is in the habit of expecting from brothers!

After all, people may say what they like of the laxity of morals in Italy, but I know of no people who have a higher appreciation of true morality when they happen to come across it! A really moral woman is a sacred thing to them as soon as she is recognized as such, and true chastity may dwell among them unafraid either on or off the stage. In all the years that we remained in Italy neither Rosamond nor I ever received an insult of any kind! We met with respect everywhere, — a respect sometimes almost amounting to reverence.

I have often been asked whether we should have found it so easy to maintain our reputation if we had not been protected and our respectability advertised by having our mother always on guard? Of course, it is not easy to determine whether things would have been the same had the circumstances been different, but my firm conviction has always been, and is, that there are no such things as *irresistible temptations* for those who are not willing to be tempted! There is a prudence and precaution born of a moral instinct which protects from unforeseen assaults on virtue. There are rules of life which the sincerely self-respecting intuitively adopt. For instance, we made it a hard and fast rule to accept no presents from any admirers, flowers presented on the stage being of course an exception! A gift of jewels is but too often an entering wedge which may lead to undoing. A favorite singer is sure to be tested along such lines. She has only to remain firm, however, making it well understood what her principles are, and no harm will befall her.

It was interesting to note the effect on our fellow artists of our unmistakable attitude on the moral plane so opposite to that of the rank and file of opera singers in Italy at that time. Their first conclusion was that we were simply cold, — devoid of hot blood in our veins. On a closer acquaintance, however, they got to understand us better, and then after puzzling out what it really implied, they bowed their heads in respect. Of course, there were scoffers here and there, and some who pitied us sincerely for what they thought we were "missing in life." I can recall the expression on the face of the basso, Della Costa, who sang with me in Florence — an expression half quizzical and half compassionate — as he exclaimed, after a long consideration of my personality one day at rehearsal, — "*Come compatisco voi altre che non fate all amore!*" which freely translated means, "How I pity you people who do not indulge in lovers!"

Our benefit at Leghorn was quite a brilliant affair, emphasizing fully the good will of the public towards us. There were gorgeous bouquets of camellias as big as a table with appropriate designs in red and white and long streamers of broad ribbon with inscriptions embroidered in gold. There were sonnets scattered broadcast, singing our praises in the highfaluting, extravagant style of the enthusiastic Italians. Many of these were doubtless effusions of our acrostical friends of "The Forum" but there were also others besides. The theatre was *illuminato a giorno*, which meant that, in addition to the usual lighting, the brass sconces which furnished an ornamentation to each tier of boxes were furnished with lighted candles, — the effect being very gay. This "daylight illumination," a little touch which the manager was apt to accord to a successful artist, was a compliment which was always expected.

A few weeks before our engagement at Leghorn came to an end there appeared on the scene a Hebrew impresario who announced a grand opera season at the Teátro Goldoni, the largest opera house in Leghorn. He had secured the services of first-class artists, among which he proposed to include us. The "Ballo in Maschera" was again to be the *pièce-de-résistance* and we were as a matter of course to be cast for our inevitable rôles of the Page and the Witch respectively. We hesitated to accept the engagement, as we felt that we were getting to be too dangerously identified with that one opera to the exclusion of opportunities to enlarge our repertory. Our friends of "The Forum" overcame our reluctance by the plea that it always added greatly to an artist's reputation to be reëngaged for a second season, and that our strong foothold with the public would make the season both a successful and an agreeable one. So we signed the proffered contract, which, as before, included a benefit.

The new company arrived duly and rehearsals began. The dramatic soprano who was to take the part of Amelia, and whom we will call Beretta, had great personal charm, besides being an admirable artist. She was of so different a type from the rank and file of opera singers with whom we had been brought into contact that we responded willingly to her very marked friendly advances. Moreover, as she, like ourselves, was accompanied by her family, consisting of both parents, a brother and a little sister, there was no doubt in our minds of her respectability. The first night of the new season was one of wild enthusiasm.

All the artists had reason to be satisfied with their reception. As for me, it was one of the times when my voice responded fully to my own desires. I was made to repeat my song in the last act *saper voreste*, which had happened also at Genoa, but it had not before occurred that the Sextet in the second scene in which the Page has such a prominent part was redemanded. In it there is a gradually ascending passage to the high C which is sustained for several bars while there is a complete pause in the music — leaving the Page all alone in her glory on top, — followed by a slow descending scale which leads back to the first theme of the tenor. Now the high C happened to be always the most effective tone in my voice (it had, in fact, led to my receiving the appellation in the newspapers of "La Prima Donna del bel do"), but never before had it sounded so vibrant and vital as on that night. I take it that the audience must have felt the same thrill that I myself felt, for, instead of waiting till the end of the piece to encore it, they interrupted with shouts of "*Bis*, *bis*, *bis*," at the end of my solitary descent of the scale, and I had to sing it all over again.

I cite this occurrence, even though it involves singing my own praises, because it is so characteristic of the impetuosity of an Italian audience! Also because it leads up to a sequel which from a psychological standpoint may be interesting, especially to singers.

The next day the impresario came to see me and in talking over the success of the last night's performance I modestly dwelt on the admirable singing and acting of Beretta. He responded, "Yes, she is an excellent artist, but there's no denying that the great hit of the evening was the Page." Then he continued, "*A proposito*, I noticed that when you started on that ascending passage in the Sextet you raised your hand toward the back of your ear and held it there while you sustained that wonderful high C of yours. I think I ought to warn you that as it happens to be just what our street venders of chestnut cake do when they cry '*Castagnaccio*'; it might expose you to comment."

Now, for some reason or other, that same gesture is the most natural thing in the world to a singer in any similar passage. However, I thanked him and promised to bear it in mind. When in the evening I reached that passage in the Sextet, every instinct led me to raise my hand as before, but possessed with the thought that I must control it, instead of being absorbed in the spirit of the music and the sound of my own voice, I became conscious of my hand, and the magnetic current was checked. There was no *thrill* any more in that high C, either for me or for any one else. It was just a good secure tone and no more! The Sextet was repeated, but there was no interruption of "*bis*, *bis*," after my solo passage, and never again in all my performances of that piece did I reach "It" — my ideal sound — again, and all because of the intrusive thought that I must not put my hand behind my ear! That impresario, without knowing it, had done me a lasting injury!

As we had now to sing every night except on Fridays — the only night "off" in Italy — the company not being a double one, we and our trusted friends were not able to foregather at "The Forum" oftener than once a week. They therefore did not follow closely our growing intimacy with Beretta and her family. They seemed, however, from the first to have their doubts of the sincerity of Beretta, whose professions of high regard for us they attributed to self-interest. It was obvious, they argued, that it was to her advantage to be on the best of terms with us because of the high esteem in which we were held in Leghorn. Our friendship gave her countenance of which, they hinted, she might stand in need! Whereupon we protested loudly, berating them for their unworthy suspicions.

One day the Berettas invited us to lunch with them. What was our astonishment to find that they had prepared a pretentious feast for us and invited a number of other guests to meet us, — among others, to our horror, the dreaded Veroniani! Our chagrin knew no bounds, for now, in spite of all our manoeuvres, our hand was called. When Beretta's father, without permission, introduced Veroniani, we were markedly distant in our bearing, but in spite of that he actually had the assurance to call on us next day! Of course we refused to receive him, and as a natural consequence, finding himself both snubbed and defeated, he became forthwith our bitter enemy.

When the opportunity came for us to talk the matter over with our friends, they were in despair at our having fallen into the trap which they, alas, too late had discovered was carefully laid for us by Beretta at the instigation of Veroniani, who had not only invented the plot but financed the feast! As we had taken particular pains to warn Beretta against permitting any intimacy with such a notorious *roué* and freely given her the benefit of our own knowledge and experience, her league with him told its own story! Our friends, who from the first had distrusted Beretta, when they saw our unwillingness to give credit to any suspicions as to her good faith or respectability, went quietly to work to find out something of her past. The revelation thereof was something horrible! Even after the moral jolt we had received from the treacherous trick she had played on us, it was almost impossible for us to conceive that so attractive, so ingratiating a creature could be actually a hopelessly depraved woman, whose immoralities were of a nature unspeakable! Equally hard was it to believe that her benign-looking father, her faded, jaded, meek little mother were of the same feather, aiding and abetting her in her debauches, and that the little sister — a perfect little fairy — was her own illicit offspring. And with *what* a parentage! Ye Gods! The disillusion was most cruel! And the conscious existence in our midst of such a nest of corruption acted like a poison on our spirits.

We had now also to face the fact that we had two powerful and deadly enemies. From that time forward all peace of mind for us was at an end! Beretta entered into intrigue upon intrigue in conjunction with the irate Veroniani to mete out worry and annoyance to us in all sorts of ways. For instance, as soon as the audience started to applaud after one of my numbers, a party of Veroniani's agents hissed it down, so that a constant friction was kept up during the rest of the season between the two factions. I had reached a point where I fairly dreaded applause, as it always meant antiphonal hissing. All I asked was to be allowed to go through my part in silence. The whole situation was so demoralizing to my spirit that it was impossible for me to do myself justice as an artist. All inspiration — all enthusiasm — all vim were killed out! It was an atmosphere that smothered the sacred fire! How thankful we both were that the season was a short one, for I do not think we could have stood it much longer! Our benefit, instead of being something to look forward to with pleasant anticipations, was merely a new subject for apprehension, for we felt sure that the enemy would have some new form of annoyance in store for us.

Gianelli, the orchestra conductor, had written expressly for us an effective one-act opera. The music was charming, and it had in it all the elements of success. There was a full house, a gay illumination and friends were numerous, so that the Veroniani's hirelings had to use some discretion in hissing, but every now and then, during some expressive phrase, a loud sneeze, a shuffling of feet, a scuffle, following a pretended dispute up in the gallery, disturbed the music and distracted the attention of the audience (who, of course, had to do their part by hissing down the noise) keeping up an intermittent disturbance throughout. A more ingenious irritant could hardly have been devised. Nor could any authoritative interference have availed, for there was nothing to lay hold of! Thus did Rosamond and I have also a taste of the ugly side of an opera singer's career after having been up to that time so uniformly well treated by our audiences. We were glad indeed when the time arrived for us to shake the dust of the Goldoni from our feet, even though it meant farewell to "The Forum" and its group of well tried, loyal friends!

CHAPTER VIII

ENGAGEMENT AT FLORENCE — WILLIAM TELL — MADAME HUNGER — JOINED BY OUR FATHER — JOYS OF FLORENCE — PICTURE GALLERIES AND CHURCHES — RETURN TO MILAN — ROSAMOND FEVER-STRICKEN — NURSING HALTS PUBLIC CAREER — DOCTOR SAPOLINI — LAKE MAGGIORE — JOINED BY DE LORENZI — EXCURSIONS — GRAPE HARVEST

FROM Leghorn we betook ourselves to Florence, where I was engaged to sing in Rossini's "William Tell." I had accepted the offer most eagerly as one more departure from the inevitable Page in "Ballo in Maschera." But alas! There was no part in it for Rosamond, and she, poor child, would have to remain at large during the entire winter on my account. The company engaged was an exceptionally fine one, the tenor and bass being artists of a high order. It is odd that while my memory is so retentive for all the happenings and even the emotions of those early periods of my career, I am unable, with but few exceptions, to recall the names of the artists with whom I was associated, and in many cases the names of the theatres where I sang have also escaped me! I remember that the bass in "William Tell" was Della Costa, and that the part of the boy, Jemmy, was taken by a young girl named Pappini, — one of three sisters, all of whom were opera singers; and that is all I remember!

On the opening night of "William Tell" I had a recurrence of my experience on the first night of my second season at Leghorn. I was not only made to repeat the lovely aria "Selva opaca," but as I ended my first solo in the duet with the tenor, the music was interrupted by cries of "*bis, bis,*" and the orchestra had to stop and go back to the beginning for me to repeat it. From a musical and artistic standpoint such proceedings on the part of the public are most irritating — particularly to the orchestral conductor and to the other singer awaiting his turn — however inspiring such spontaneous outbursts of approval may be to their subject! For my part all of that flattering demonstration was as nothing compared to the blessed consciousness that I was singing better than I knew how!

An old celebrity of operatic fame, Madame Hunger, who was present, said things about me to the conductor that I cannot bring myself to repeat! Having ascertained where we lived, Madame Hunger called on us shortly after and invited us to spend the day at her villa, which was charmingly situated on a high elevation on one of the foothills of the Apennines.

We had a delightful visit with our courteous and appreciative hostess, whose genuine feeling for the artistic qualities in singing, as against many of the prevalent cheap effects, afforded us much of common interest. She had under her care a niece whom she was educating as a singer, — a slim young girl of a rather tepid personality. Madame Hunger had her sing to us Amina's first scene from the "Sonnambula." It would have pleased me to be able to give her some of the hearty praise that had been so generously meted out to me by her aunt, but the girl was so devoid of temperament and imagination that though she showed the effects of careful training in smoothness and good phrasing her singing was not interesting. The voice was colourless and tepid, like herself; no emotion ever got into it!

Some years later, when she came to London, this same niece made a good success as a concert singer, — her voice being adjudged sweet and her style finished and chaste. She finally settled in Dresden, where as Madame Orgenie she was much sought after as a teacher of singing. That little interlude at the villa of Madame Hunger was the only social experience we had during our stay in Florence — owing to the fact that I had to be on duty every night at the opera, for "William Tell" held the stage during the entire season.

My father joined us in Florence at Christmas and had for the first time the opportunity to hear me sing in opera. After the excitement of the first week or so of "William Tell" I had fallen off somewhat, and I no longer had the supreme joy of feeling that I had "got there," as on the first night. My father, therefore, only heard me in my average achievement. How I wished he might have been present on the first night! I think he remained satisfied, however, that there was some stuff in me worth developing. I was not dramatic enough, he thought; I should be more forceful in action in the third act, he said, and no doubt he was right; for in those early days of my career I had a dread of exaggerating which may well have carried me too far in the opposite direction.

As there were no more rehearsals after the opera was once in running order, I had practically the whole of every day to myself, either to practise or to roam about that wondrous city in the company of my parents and Rosamond. Those who know Florence can appreciate how great the privilege! Can one picture anything more delightful than a daily stroll along the banks of the Arno in the winter sunshine, perhaps crossing the Ponte Vecchio with its interesting little jewelers' shops on either side; or a ramble in the beautiful Boboli Gardens, followed later by a quiet half hour in the Duomo with its famous bell tower, designed by Giotto, or in the church of the Santa Croce replete with monuments in memory of the great men and the historic characters of Florence? The city is so glutted with art treasures that it would take a lifetime to study them all! Hardly a day passed without our spending at least an hour in the Uffizzi with the masterpieces of Raphael, Titian, Michael Angelo, Paul Veronesi, Andrea del Sarto, Perugino, Correggio, Benvenuto Cellini, and a host of other great masters. Under no other circumstances could we have had such an opportunity to study at leisure the painting and scupltures of those old artists. What good company one was in! What an atmosphere of inspiration and of high ideals! Think of being able to form an intimacy with Canova's Venus and the Venus de Medici, the young Apollo of Praxiteles, the Wrestlers and the Dancing Faun, — all gathered together in the Tribune! Florence more than any other city seemed permeated with subtle emanations of its great men. One seemed in some mysterious way to be brought to a new perception of Dante and Petrarch, Galileo and Boccaccio, none of these being unknown to me before. I think it must be because the Tuscans keep their immortal ones *alive* in their hearts and minds, because they never forget their great ones but proudly hold fast to them in their memory.

When my engagement in Florence came to a finish we returned to Milan to make arrangements for the next campaign. Here trouble overtook us. First of all

Rosamond developed some serious throat trouble which necessitated an immediate operation, and scarcely had she recovered from its effects when she was laid low with typhoid fever. That put a new burden of anxiety on my poor little mother, and at the same time it put a stop to my singing for the time being, for of course I could accept no engagements under the circumstances!

Our faithful guardian, De Lorenzi, who was ever ready to jump into the breach, put us in the way of getting the advice of Doctor Sapolini, King Victor Emmanuel's physician, and one who was regarded as the greatest authority in Italy. He was a man of advanced ideas, who had outgrown the conventional methods of treatment, such as the letting of blood, which was constantly resorted to in Italy under all sorts of conditions. San Giovanni told me, for instance, that his wife was bled regularly every three weeks, the function being performed by the barber, and that he also had recourse to the same treatment whenever he felt heavy in his head.

Sapolini, however, worked on very different principles; he never resorted to letting blood, and he reversed the treatment of fevers from a hot, to an ice-water régime. Perhaps his "advanced theories" might seem very old-fashioned if not obsolete to the present generation of physicians, but at any rate he pulled my sister through!

Sapolini was greatly interested in the case, which was certainly a baffling one. The more baffling it was the more interested he became. The crisis, which was looked for after about three weeks, did not take place, and the fever continued from week to week without any sign of abatement, till it seemed as if the poor emaciated frame could hold out no longer. As there were no such luxuries as trained nurses for hire in those days, Mamma and I had to take entire charge of our patient, — Mamma watching her by night and I by day. I scarcely ever left the sick room from morning till night, zealously carrying out the doctors' orders to keep slipping little pieces of cracked ice into her poor, parched mouth without cessation. With the exception of some orange juice nothing else passed her lips during all those long weary weeks. Doctor Sapolini used to sit by her bedside and talk to me by the hour, telling me most wonderful and interesting things about the mysterious workings of our human mechanism, and awakening in me a keen desire to understand more and more about it which has lasted all my life. Thus the intimate friendship of physicians has always been one of my preferences, and my ready responsiveness to the tales of their experiences has led them on their part to yield me their willing companionship. Nothing could exceed Doctor Sapolini's devoted interest in us or the faithfulness of his ministrations.

At last, after seven weeks of continued fever, the doctor announced that he must resort to heroic treatment, as a reaction must be brought about at all costs! He ordered us, accordingly, to take a brick of smooth ice and rub the whole body from top to toe with it, then wrap the patient in blankets. Should that fail to produce a reaction, the case would be hopeless, he said. But it did not fail! The drastic treatment resulted in a profuse perspiration, from which moment the raging fever was mastered. Then followed a period of pitiful weakness, of ravenous hunger and of cruelly enforced starvation. To deny the poor hungry soul the food she craved — but which would have brought about a relapse — was the hardest task of all!

The convalescence was painfully slow, though an almost imperceptible gain was made every day. At last the doctor pronounced that she might risk a short journey and advised us to take her to Lake Maggiore for a change and for final recuperation. Our dear, kind doctor took upon himself to find a suitable apartment for us on the shores of the lake, and in a week or so he came there in person to see how his patient was getting on.

What a joy it was to me to feel free again after so many weary weeks of close confinement in the sick room! I can hardly describe it! Rosamond was still far too weak to do more than recline in the open, but I used to go tramping over hill and dale with Julius and the twins, since the tempered heat of autumn permitted, and the enchanting surroundings allured. I almost forgot that I was a prima donna. The opera and all its accessories seemed thousands of miles away, and I a child again, with all the old love of nature revived!

We spent many mornings in the vineyards, helping the natives to harvest their rich purple grapes, and incidentally eating our fill of the luscious fruit. We also assisted at the process of "treading the grapes" for wine, and I am bound to confess that the sight of the naked feet of those none too clean peasants in such close contact with the juicy fruit greatly mitigated my taste for the wine of the country.

During our sojourn at Lake Maggiore, De Lorenzi joined us for a short visit, and we made together some delightful excursions on the lake. A particular impression has remained with me of our excursion to the beautiful Island of Boromeo, — a perfect fairyland in truth! In connection with it I remember that the head gardener in charge of the villa and grounds picked for us a few grapes from a vine on a trellis near the house.

They were very large, oval in shape, of a pale green color, and they had a distinct flavor of pineapple. That we remarked at once on the pineapple flavor seemed to afford the gardener infinite satisfaction, as it gave him the opportunity to explain that pineapple had been budded on the grapevine. I do not know what our California wizard in grafting, Mr. Burbank, would say to this. The fact remains, however, that the grapes *did* taste of pineapples! Later on, in Southern Italy, I came across a vine said to have been budded with the strawberry vine. That would seem to me to be more feasible! Some wine made from its grapes which was presented to me had the richness and flavor of a strawberry cordial, yet we were assured that it was the pure juice of the grape. If it be true that these vines were not simply freaks of nature but really the result of experiments in grafting, I wonder that no one seems to have attempted further experiments on those lines.

CHAPTER IX

A "ONE PART" PRIMA DONNA — OPPORTUNITY TO ENLARGE REPERTORY — START SOUTH FOR MOLFETTA — A HEARTY WELCOME AND TOO HEARTY MEAL — MOLFETTA UNIQUE — STRANGE CUSTOMS — LOYAL FRIENDS — MARKETING BY PROXY — THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE — A REVELATION — A DISINTERESTED IMPRESARIO — A FASTIDIOUS AUDIENCE — COMPANY DISCHARGED

ROSAMOND had now regained sufficient strength to enable her to take up the thread of life once more, though many a day had to pass before she could think of singing again. There was nothing, however, to keep me away from the stage any longer, so on our return to Milan I made it known that I was open to engagements for the winter season. I had done some thinking during my enforced vacation, and I had made up my mind that I must break away once for all from the inevitable rôle of the Page in the "Ballo in Maschera," — offers of engagements for which still continued to beset me. I felt that I must extend my repertory and gain a wider experience in dramatic interpretations.

On this matter I consulted San Giovanni, who approved the position I was taking in rejecting further engagements that would hold me fast to the usual long-continued runs of the "Ballo." He said the thing for me to do was to sing for a season or two in some place where it was customary to change the opera every week. There were many such places, he said, both in the Roman and Neapolitan States, where the audiences were extremely critical and hard to please, because of there being only one opera house, and because remoteness from any big city rendered them entirely dependent for their winter's entertainment on what they could procure for themselves in their own little township.

That proposition appealed to me very strongly, so I put it promptly to my agent, who, with equal promptness, obtained for me an engagement in a little town on the shores of the Adriatic, called Molfetta. On expressing my readiness to accept it, the agent said, "You will have operas enough to sing there to your heart's content! They will keep you busy enough, never fear! And what is more, I can assure you that you will find there an audience that knows what good singing is and that regards the best as none too good for their pleasure!" The contract was duly signed and we began at once to make our preparations to start south. Doctor Sapolini highly approved the scheme of our spending the winter in that region, since its climate was favorable to Rosamond's condition, her vitality being as yet by no means up to par.

As there were evidences that the health of the twins was not being properly attended to in their college, Mamma felt that she ought to look after them herself for a while, more especially as they were obviously losing all sense of their own nationality. The military college was fast making thoroughgoing Italians of them. They had acquired the dialects of every place they had visited with us during their vacations, and as for their English, — it was decidedly queer! They had also adopted a freedom of expression quite foreign to the Anglo-Saxon race, besides a happy-go-lucky laxity of deportment which, as a conservative English woman, gave my mother some alarm. She concluded, therefore, not knowing how otherwise to dispose of them, to take them along with us to Molfetta.

It was nightfall when we reached our destination after a long, tedious and fatiguing journey. We were met at the station by a delegation of the Opera Management, obviously primed for an eager and anxious inspection of the new prima donna, on whom a goodly share of their winter's entertainment would depend. We were escorted by them to the Albergo, where we were to pass the night, — a not very inviting resting place, in truth, with its dreary-looking, spacious, sparsely furnished rooms and rough stone floors. Supper had been ordered at which our escorts assisted (there were eight of them) while we were longing for bed and a good sleep rather than to make ourselves agreeable to a parcel of strangers and partake of an elaborate supper.

And what a supper! Can I ever forget the agony of it? The Molfettese idea of a hearty welcome was evidently embodied in a hearty meal. They were apparently bent on showing us what a wondrous assortment of sea-food the Adriatic could offer us during our sojourn on their friendly shores. There was terrapin, which at that time was to us a strange food and not at all inviting in appearance! We were also regaled with several interesting varieties of deep-sea fish, equally unknown to us, prepared in all sorts of ways. But when we were congratulating ourselves that the grand display of novelties was completed at last, there appeared on the scene an uncanny dish which we were told with great impressiveness was Calamajo (which literally translated means "Inkstand"). How shall I ever describe that unholy dish, regarded as such a delicacy by the natives! If you can imagine such a thing as a large, fat jellyfish, rolled up, fried in oil and served with a rich sauce, you will get as good an idea of it as I can give you. We strove heroically to swallow the glassy, slippery stuff — its one saving grace being that it slipped down easily — drinking as an antidote a good draught of most excellent red wine provided by our hosts from their own vintages.

At last, towards midnight, our entertainers did us the kindness to leave us to our own devices. The inn had only two guest rooms at our disposal. Mamma, Rosamond and I occupied one, which was large enough to have been divided into three separate rooms, and the boys took possession of the other. We passed a wretched night. All of us were horribly sick as a result of all those dreadful messes forcibly introduced into our exhausted systems.

Early next morning two of the last night's company appeared at the Albergo to escort us to the apartment they had prepared for us. They acquainted us with the fact that the housing of a family of strangers was an entirely new and puzzling problem for them, for up to that time their artists had not been in the habit of bringing their families with them, and consequently they could be easily located as boarders in certain of the native dwellings. In order to obtain a whole suite of rooms for us it had been necessary for one of the prominent families named Calò to vacate the second floor of their house, which was put at our disposal.

Our first view of our future dwelling place was staggering! Such a strange medley of things I never beheld! The suite had been furnished by voluntary contributions in a most interesting and amusing fashion. For instance, in our dining room we found a set of most beautiful high-backed chairs of carved oak, which looked as if they might have come from some grand Cathedral. These had been contributed by the Governor, Don Tommaso Pannunzio, and the strange appearance they made in proximity with a very ordinary table, released from the dwelling of some far less important family, is almost indescribable! All the other furnishings were after this motley order, gathered together from a variety of sources without regard for taste or fitness. It was all very amusing to us, however, and we took it very good-naturedly. It began to dawn on us that we had struck a unique place of equally unique customs and surroundings, and there was promise that life would be very interesting to any one fond of new experiences. It seemed to us, as we grew more familiar with it, that Molfetta must be unlike any other place in the world. As I look back, I think it really is worthy of being described in detail.

Imagine a town of not less than thirty thousand inhabitants without a single shop of any kind, — not even a country store, such as we have in our villages. Daily supplies were brought in from neighboring farms and sold in the open marketplace just after daybreak, everything being cleared away in an hour or two. Molfetta appears on the map as one of a series of little towns on the shores of the Adriatic in the Apulia region. These towns lie from ten to twenty miles apart. Molfetta is situated between Trani and Bari, the latter being the largest and most important town of the section. Each of these towns has a language or rather a jargon of its own, more or less incomprehensible to the inhabitants of the neighboring towns.

Plumbing was a luxury in the whole of that section, the absence of which was unregretted, because unknown! The inhabitants seemed to be quite content with the simple arrangement of carrying all the day's accumulated refuse at nightfall in pails to the roof of the house and dumping the contents down into a back street, where it was shovelled and swept up next morning at daybreak into little tip-carts by old hags who looked like so many replicas of the Witch of Endor. These unsavory beldames, having filled their carts with the malodorous slops, proceeded to the beach, where the material was promptly discharged into the sea.

It happened more than once, when I was being carried to the opera in a "sedan chair" — the only local vehicle for human transportation — that the familiar cry from a roof top, "*Va da sott*," came too close on the splash that followed to enable the bearers to dodge it altogether, — when the air became sulphurous with oaths unspeakable!

Our food was purchased daily by one of the Opera Committee, as it was an acknowledged impossibility for Mamma to go to the market at daybreak and haggle with the peasants of Apulia in a veritable babel of unknown tongues. We hardly ever knew what we were going to have for dinner till it came on the table, though we learnt that the information was handed about freely from mouth to mouth on the public square, the doings of the prima donna and all that concerned her being a matter of vital interest, apparently, to all the gossips of the town! Royalty could not be more closely watched, nor its actions more eagerly reported, than were the doings of this innocent and unsuspecting prima donna in the house of Calò! At the end of each week our kindly purveyor came to settle up accounts with Mamma, who was only too grateful to be spared the intolerable inconvenience of catering for the family in a shopless town.

After such a description one might naturally infer that the upper classes must have shared the characteristic primitiveness of the town itself; but not so! Molfetta had its Aristocracy, consisting of intelligent and highly educated people, whose friendship was well worth cultivating. The sons and daughters of these were, and had been during the last two or three decades, sent to Naples for a superior college education. Before that time, however, women for the most part received no schooling, owing to the counsel of the priests, whose dictum it was that women should not be encouraged to do any thinking on their own account, the instruction received from their priest being all that was desirable for them to know! The knowledge of this old-time domination of the Church came to me in rather a startling way at the house of the Governor, where I used to spend a great deal of my leisure.

His wife, Donna Bettina Pannunzio, was one of the women whose friendship was a source of great pleasure to me; she was so wise, such a keen observer of life, her inferences so just and so sane! I regarded her as a rare woman of unusual intelligence and strength of character. One afternoon, while we were together, an officer came in with some papers requiring the signature of her husband, Don Tommaso. As he was away on an important errand at Trieste, Donna Bettina was asked to place her signature on the document. I noticed that she made a cross instead of writing her name, and when the officer had retired I asked her why she did that. "*Cara mia,*" she said, "I was never taught to read or write. When I was a young girl it was considered improper. We look at things now in a different light. My daughter Anita has had an education. But I do not know how to write, and it is a hard task, you know, to teach an old dog new tricks!" What a crying shame that seemed to me, for here was a woman who might have risen to almost any heights had her mind been cultivated!

The arrangements for the opera season in Molfetta were almost as peculiar to them as most of their other customs. The first proceeding was to pool the money of all the subscribers and plan the season's expenditures on the basis of that lump sum. An impresario from Naples or Rome was then engaged to take charge of all the details of management, — such as the procuring of artists, chorus, orchestra and conductor, taking upon himself, in fact, the whole responsibility of running the theater without further profit to himself than the regular salary allotted him for his services. As the subscribers among themselves took up the entire seating capacity of the house, there remained no chance for speculation. Money making was not in the programme; the people only wanted a pleasurable entertainment in return for their money. This arrangement, however, made them very keen on getting performances which were entirely satisfactory to them in every detail. It is to be remembered also that their opera was the only distraction and entertainment they had in prospect for the entire winter season and succeeding *Quaresima* or Lent. To dislike the voice or object to the personality of any one of the artists would therefore mar their pleasure for the entire season. The opera was their toy — their joy — their all in all!

This explanation will account for what happened at the beginning of the season. We opened with Verdi's

"Masnadieri" after a week of careful rehearsing. It was a good representation taken as a whole. It went smoothly and without a flaw. But the public did not fancy the voices or stage presence of the artists for the most part, and they quickly made up their minds that they were not going to be saddled with them. I learnt next day that after the legalized three night's trial the entire company was to be discharged, with the exception of myself and the second bass. It was a sad little group of artists that wended their way to the station. I felt genuinely sorry for them, for we had become quite friendly at rehearsals, most of them being of quite a good sort.

And now our poor impresario had the hard task before him of forming a new company, and everything had to be begun all over again!

CHAPTER X

NEW COMPANY — THE BARITONE SANSONE — "MARIA DE ROHAN" AND "LA VESTALE" — STUDYING RÔLES WITHOUT PIANO — A MYSTERIOUS PRIEST — A BENEFIT — OUR SERVANT'S TRICKS — MOLFETTESE HOSPITALITY — ORANGE GROVES

OUR impresario had the good luck to secure the services of a baritone of high repute, named Sansone. His voice being no longer in its first freshness, he had ceased to be in demand for the larger and more important theaters, or the Molfettese never could have hoped to include him in their operatic company. He had always been distinguished for his fine dramatic interpretations; and as an actor he still remained a "star." A good robust tenor had also been unearthed by our manager, together with an excellent bass, also a dramatic soprano for the heavy parts, named Bruccione, — a good experienced artist, though no longer possessing the charm of youth.

The first opera to be brought out with the new company was "Maria de Rohan" by Donizetti, which, being preëminently tragic and heavy in character, should properly have been cast with Bruccione in the title rôle, as the older and more experienced artist. Sansone, however, took it into his head that he wanted to play it with me. When I protested that being a complete novice in heavy tragedy, I dared not hope that I could fill the requirements for playing up to him in so exacting a rôle as that of Maria de Rohan, he smiled at my diffidence, assuring me that I underrated my own powers, but that he had full confidence in me. There was nothing for me to do, therefore, but to "brace up" and do my best! But I warned him that I should look to him to be my instructor and put me through.

"Maria de Rohan" — an opera quite unknown to both the public and the artists of to-day — is one of the most exacting of operas, the whole tragedy depending on just three artists — the baritone, tenor and soprano — with no intervening choruses or secondary parts to help out. Sansone was wonderful at the stage rehearsals! He opened out to me an entirely new vista in dramatic art. Never suggesting to me what to do, he simply discussed with me the dramatic situations, leaving me to determine what my state of mind would be under those circumstances! In pursuing his advice, I gradually found that I was identifying myself with the Duchess Maria and entering into the stormy passions which besieged her. It was here that my vivid imagination stood me in good stead!

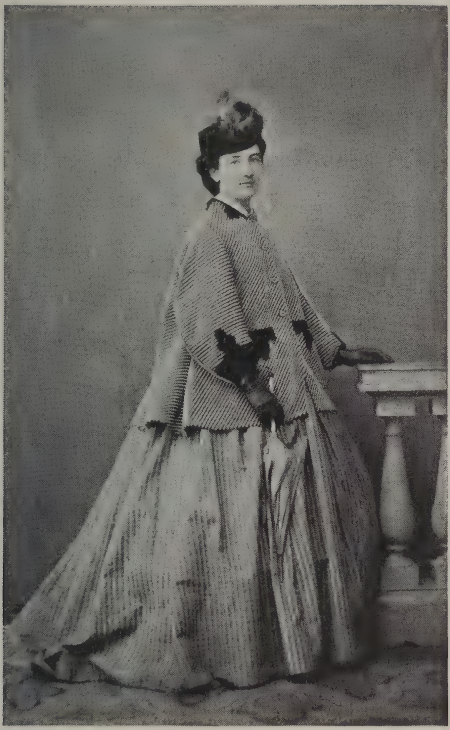
The story is an oldtime one: The lady, Maria, after mourning her betrothed, the lover of her choice, reported killed in battle, is finally induced to wed the Duke of Rohan. He wins her respect and affection; their life is passably happy when its serenity is suddenly disturbed by the return of the first lover, supposed to be dead. He rushes into her presence; his passionate despair awakens her own dormant passion. The Duke surprises them at the climax of their emotions. There is only one course, — husband or lover must die. He takes from a drawer two pistols, one of which he offers to his rival. They retire to a closet. Two shots are heard from within. Maria, paralyzed with terror, falls to earth with an agonized cry. Either her husband has killed her lover, or her lover has killed her husband, — ghastly alternative! The suspense is unbearable. She seeks to drag herself across the room to the closet door. It opens; the Duke stands before her with folded arms, the embodiment of a Nemesis! Curtain.

The above outlines the situations that I, at nineteen years, had the task set me to make real! And real they actually became on the strength of Sansone's wonderful representation of the Duke. I recall perfectly to-day that the vain effort to drag myself across the stage after the shots were heard was not feigned, and the agonized cry I uttered was quite involuntary.

When it was all over the stage was literally thronged with people profoundly affected, who seemed possessed with a sense that something dreadful had really happened! It was a great triumph for Sansone, and it was the first inkling I ever had that I really had it in me to be an emotional actress. I certainly owed the discovery of my own latent powers of expression entirely to Sansone, who was the first to show me the great part that *imagination* must play in dramatic action.

I played a number of other tragic operas with Sansone, — operas now totally ignored by the present generation of singers and impresarios, such as Donizetti's "Maria Padilla," and Mercadante's "Vestale." The latter made a great stir, the fame of its success reaching Bari and Trani, which resulted in a number of people from those towns coming to Molfetta in the hope of obtaining admission to the theater by courtesy of the box owners, some of whom were induced to cede their rights for one evening in the week, — as much out of pride in their opera as for any other reason.

"La Vestale" had in it some charming numbers, one



CLARA DORIA AT TWENTY

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of the most impressive being the last song in the opera, sung by the unfortunate Vestal Virgin condemned to be buried alive for the heinous sin of letting the sacred fire in the Temple die out during a passionate interview with a lover supposed to be dead before she took the vow, and who forced his way into the Temple during her watch. The Vestal Virgin, who is brought on the stage on a bier, has mercifully lost her mind, and, like the unhappy Lucia, sings of love, of sunshine and green pastures, before her living body is consigned to the earth. The last rondo forms a grateful contrast to the gruesome burial that follows as the curtain descends.

It would be tiresome to tabulate all the different operas I appeared in, — a sample is enough. Bruccione had an easy and a restful time, as she was hardly ever called on to sing more than once a week, the chief brunt of the work falling to my share.

There is no doubt in my mind that a greater strain was being put on me than was good for so young a singer! I remember that after the second night of "Maria de Rohan" I had to be lifted out of my sedan chair, and that I crawled upstairs on all fours because I lacked the strength to walk up, so great was the reaction from the nervous excitement I had been under. Though I was a perfectly healthy creature, I was by no means robust at nineteen. Then I had always to be studying and rehearsing some new opera, while I was playing nearly every night.

There was no piano in our apartment, so I got into the habit of studying my parts by a purely mental process. The good Pannunzios, it is true, put their piano and their *salon* at my disposal for as often and as long as I cared to use it, but I only availed myself of their offer occasionally, as I found that I was getting really excellent results from my mentally conceived expression undisturbed by the actual sound of my own voice.

We had some good friends in Molfetta who came from time to time to talk over the performances. Among them were very intelligent judges whose criticisms were of value to me. These friends, like those of our little coterie in Leghorn, kept close watch over us lest some harm should befall us. I personally was inherently unsuspicious of evil, partly, perhaps, because I was too absorbed in my work to give much thought to aught else! When anything unusual occurred I accepted it as one of the strange customs of Molfetta. And unusual things did certainly occur from time to time!

For instance, large baskets were left at our door without card or message, containing olives, dried figs, pomegranates, bottles of red wine from some delicious home vintage, fancy cakes and all sorts of goodies. At other times there would be left on our threshold a large branch of oranges fresh plucked from the tree, or a huge *pomo* as big as your head, — supposed to be the identical apple that got Adam and Eve into trouble in the Garden of Eden. When I questioned our servant as to where all these good things came from, all I could get from her was "Don Mauro," — which name she pronounced in a casual and matter-of-course tone. But as I had no idea who "Don Mauro" was, it meant nothing whatever to me! Meanwhile, we ate up these anonymous offerings with infinite relish. Then it happened quite frequently that on our return home from a walk or a rehearsal we would find bunches of flowers on the floor. As this occurred quite frequently, my curiosity was at last roused, and one day when two or three of our friends were calling, I said to them, "I wonder who it is that throws flowers into our sitting room?"

They smiled, and looking at each other significantly, said in an aside, "Don Mauro!"

Don Mauro again! "And who is Don Mauro?" I asked.

"The priest who officiates at the Duomo," was the answer.

The church dignified by the name of Il Duomo was situated opposite the house we lived in, forming the principal feature of the Piazza.

One of our friends continued, "Do you see that projecting wing on the house next to you? And do you see that little square closet window at right angles with your further window?"

"Well, what of it?" I asked.

"Don Mauro watches there, and when you are absent he throws the flowers."

"Why does he do that?" I asked.

At this they laughingly replied, "Don Mauro is at the opera every night!"

I could get nothing further from them. As we never made his acquaintance during the whole of our stay in Molfetta, he remained for me a man of mystery, though I became familiar with a black cassock and a pair of dark, deep-set, intense-looking eyes in a corner of the theater.

Great preparations were made for my benefit. The daylight illumination in the form of wax candles was sent for from Naples. I was informed that it was customary for the beneficiary to sit at the entrance to the auditorium in costume and receive the audience in person as a hostess at a private reception. I balked somewhat at this queer custom, but when I found how they looked forward to it as their privilege to hand to the prima donna in person their voluntary contribution, in which it was their pleasure to outvie each other in generosity, I gave in and sat at my little table with the plate before me with the best grace I could muster! My personal friends made it easy for me by standing near by and by making my penance as short as possible.

The public fairly let themselves go that night! It seemed as if they could not do enough to show their partiality. It was a night of blossoms and poetry! And what good sonnets there were among those leaflets that were wafted my way. One that was almost classic in style was signed "Don Mauro de F——." Of course "Don Mauro" had to be in it. At the stage door I found a bevy of youths in waiting who pushed aside the sedan bearers and insisted on carrying me home themselves. This was very well, but there were so many of them pushing each other aside that it resulted in my being most painfully joggled about, so that I was ungrateful enough to wish my usual steady-going bearers to replace these rampant youths.

Our servant, Natalizia — a tall, rawboned, yellow-parchment-faced woman of the people — was in her way quite a character. She was so proud of being handmaiden to "La Prima Donna" that the sense of her importance made her laud it over all of her own kind. She must have managed also to impress some unsuspecting youths who frequented the opera that she possessed some special influence over me as *confidante*, and that she could obtain from me certain marks of favor by skilful tactics, — for a consideration! She was caught in the act by some of our friends, — selling locks of my hair which she hinted were obtained from Headquarters (excuse the joke!). It seemed that this most ingenious *intrigante* had collected enough hair-combings to make quite a good stock of locks, which she cut, trimmed, and tied with narrow ribbon and enclosed in envelopes filched from our store of stationery. We learned that she had been doing quite a lively business in love-locks for some time before she was found out and her trick exposed.

The good people of Molfetta were very hospitable. They delighted in elaborately dining and wining us whenever an opportunity occurred. Thus we were introduced to many strange dishes, fearfully and wonderfully made! Some of them very good, however! The repast always commenced with fruits and ended with raw vegetables, — such as *finocchio* (a highly cultivated fennel root, white as snow, and most attractive in appearance) and raw purple carrots, which are really not bad. They are considered so wholesome that they often give them to infants in arms to nibble. As soon as you crossed any threshold to pay a visit, delicious cordials were produced. These were all of domestic manufacture and of great variety, coming under the generic name of Rossoleo. The cordial at Molfetta took the place of the afternoon tea with us. Our friends, intent on introducing us to all the joys of Molfetta, also got up picnics for us at their country estates, where we feasted on a hot salad of *Cime di rape* (the young delicate sprout of the turnip top), freshly gathered by us and boiled in a copper cauldron in an outhouse. A huge pile of these delectable greens, dressed with lemon juice and olive oil, was served in a soup plate to each one, and I am bound to confess that nothing either before or since has ever tasted quite so good as that homogeneous mess!

One of our great pleasures was to spend an occasional hour in the early morning in some one of the orange groves owned by our friends. The enormous variety of *agrumi* was a revelation to us. Up to that time all oranges were for us just oranges, and lemons just lemons, — only differing in appearance and quality as produced in different climates. But here were fancy oranges and lemons of all sorts which never reach our markets, — the result of experimental grafting and also of freaks of nature. Then there were limes, bergamots and the *pomo* of Eden, which looks something like a grapefruit of enormous size. I think the traditional serpent must have been well versed in camouflage when he tempted Eve to eat of it, for of all the fakes in attractive fruits the *pomo* is the worst! The outer skin is alluringly fragrant, but after cutting through four inches or more of a firm, tasteless pulp, you come at last to the edible part, which is no bigger than an orange, and tastes like an inferior lemon. The pomegranate also flourishes in those oranges groves in all its beauty and decorativeness.

I should be almost ashamed to say how many oranges we devoured on our visits to the groves. One was led on with the desire to taste of this kind and that till the number mounted into the dozens. However, only the lower half of the orange, into which most of the juice is deposited, was ever eaten; the upper part to which the stem is attached was always discarded. We asked how they accounted for the different varieties of blood oranges; and were told that they were the result of contact with the pomegranate tree. That was their theory. I do not know whether it would hold good or not. We might ask brother Burbank!

CHAPTER XI

START FOR NAPLES — SCENE AT STATION — A GRUESOME JOURNEY — THE VALLEY OF BOVINO — NEAPOLITAN WAYS — A WARNING — A BURGLARY — A BLAND LANDLORD — A STRANGE REVELATION — A ROMANTIC YOUTH

WHEN the winter and *Quaresima* opera season at Molfetta had come to an end, the question arose where and how to spend our summer vacation most profitably and agreeably? It did not seem expedient to move our family northward, as the Committee had expressed their desire to retain my services for the following season, and I had willingly accepted their offer, because I felt that I was gaining an experience there that I could never expect to obtain in a more important theater. There was, moreover, the inducement that Rosamond, who was now almost in normal health again, would be engaged for the contralto parts.

Our manager, Perroni, who had been unlucky as impresario on his own account in Naples and who had left there many unpaid debts, was only too glad to serve on a fixed salary for another year in Molfetta, and the dramatic tenor, Trappani, who had supported Sansone and myself so admirably in the tragic operas, was also to be retained.

The prospect, therefore, was favorable, as both Trappani and Perroni were good fellows; moreover, there would be no danger of an upset of the company such as had taken place at the opening of the first season!

After some debating we concluded to spend the summer months in Naples, where amongst other things we could replenish our wardrobes.

When the time of our departure arrived there was an exciting scene at the station. Though there was a strict rule at Molfetta forbidding any one who was not travelling to enter within the precincts of the station, a large party had managed to obtain a special permit to see us off, and the news of it having spread, a large crowd had congregated outside the station to see what was going on. Of course the irrepressible Natalizia was there in full force, wildly gesticulating, and doubtless dispensing all sorts of sensational information trumped up for the occasion, to a delighted audience. It was indeed a relief to get quietly settled in our railway carriage after all the scrimmage and the noise of cheering.

We could only travel as far as Foggia by rail; the remainder of our journey had to be by coach. As part of our way during the night lay through the desolate Valley of Bovino, which was infested with brigands, there was allotted to us a military escort of *Carabinieri.* Without that precaution we should indeed have had but a sorry time of it, for we had been "fed up" with gruesome stories of atrocities unspeakable committed by the brigands on travellers. We took precious good care to take no valuables with us and to shed our rings before starting, as, amongst other things, we were warned that the brigands had a playful little way of chopping off the fingers of their victims to save the trouble of peeling off the rings!

I shall never forget that journey! It will always remain in my mind as the epitome of discomfort, both mental and physical!

It was a dark, starless night; the mountains shadowing the valley loomed up black and sinister, and the deep silence, broken only by the tramp of the horses' feet of our little cortège and the rattle of our escorts' carbines, was nerve-racking beyond words. The three boys slept peacefully through it all, but Mamma, Rosamond and I never closed our eyes, and when finally we reached Naples next morning, we were thoroughly exhausted and good for nothing.

An uncle of Trappani, to whom he had written on our behalf, was there to meet us, appearing to us in the guise of a veritable angel of salvation! We put ourselves limply into his hands and allowed him to dispose of us as he thought best. He had looked up an apartment into which we were only too glad to tumble without question or criticism. Our good angel — whose name, by the way, was Ferraro — having done everything he could for the time being, left us to our rest, the thing we needed most of all just then.

When we revived sufficiently to observe our surroundings we found ourselves in a neat but unpretentious house, situated in a narrow street. What struck us at once was the incongruous magnificence of the furnishings of our apartment. Such an array of valuable antiques of various interesting periods! Gorgeous candelabra and sconces; clocks of rare design and workmanship, and a wealth of precious pottery and china.

Our landlord, a bland and portly man of about sixty-five years of age, called on us promptly and showed himself anxious to do anything in his power to insure our comfort. On our expressing surprise at the presence of so many art treasures in our apartment, he explained in rather a casual way that he was a collector of antiques, and that having more things than he had room for in his emporium he bestowed them in sundry apartments which he rented, — of which ours was one. And thereby hangs a tale which will be revealed later!

After we had been in Naples for a few days, Papa joined us there, one of the reasons which had determined our choice of a summer residence having been his expressed desire to visit "La bella Napoli."

Were I to begin to dilate on the fascinations of that beautiful city, I should hardly know when to stop. Or were I to describe the interesting excursions made by us to Herculaneum, Pompeii, Vesuvius and elsewhere, I should be carried far beyond the scope of my story. But even if one never had visited any of its three hundred churches, its Museum, or any of its historic landmarks, Naples had an atmosphere of its own so full of romance and at the same time of bubbling gaiety that it was good to be there, and being there, good to be alive.

All the activities of life seemed to be taking place in the open streets, — so mild and balmy was the climate. In fact, private dwellings seemed almost a superfluity save to sleep in and as a shelter from the scorching midday sun. One found in the open everything one required for eating, drinking, and amusement. The familiar cry of the watermelon vendor with his tip-cart well stocked with luscious slices of the cool juicy fruit still seems to ring in my ear. "*Anguria! Bell' anguria! Si mangia, si beve, si lava la faccia, per un centesimo!*" (Fine watermelon. You eat, you drink, you wash your face — all for one cent!)

What an abundance of delicious fruits and strange vegetables in evidence everywhere, some that we had never happened to see before! Everything seemed to tell of a generous soil responding to a perennial sunshine. The indescribable variety of weird-looking crustacea was also a source of wonder to us, for the Neapolitans eat with gusto all sorts of natural products which we discard, both of shell fish and fungi. Most of the despised sorts of these latter which we used contemptuously to call "toadstools" were marketable articles in Naples. How refreshing the foaming glass of water from the famous spring of Santa Lucia, which with an added squeeze of lemon juice was transformed into a sparkling and effervescent beverage. At most of the principal street corners there sat a battered old man with a battered old instrument of some sort, chanting some quaint old Neapolitan ditty. Who was there who could have a soul above dealing with those merry tip-cart men who joked and laughed, shouted and sang, — and cheated you whenever they had a chance?

We drew the line, however, at the *Okypoky* men, — the sanitariness of whose frozen stuff seemed questionable! By the way, I wonder if that epithet has ever been traced to what seems to me its origin, — namely, the familiar protest of the street urchin at the mean little dab of ice cream doled out to him for his coin. "*O, che poche*" (Oh, how little!) is his cry of protest. "Oche-poche man," therefore, describes the stingy vendor as sized up by the street urchin. That is the way I interpret it!

One day our obliging landlord came to us and after some casual conversation, remarked, "Are you not afraid to keep your windows open during the night? Your apartment could easily be entered, you know, as it is only one flight."

"We should suffocate if we kept them closed," we replied; "besides, as our venetian blinds are down, no one could tell from outside that our windows are open."

About a week later, Rosamond and I, who were in the habit of rising soon after daybreak for an early morning walk in order to get ahead of the sun, saw to our dismay, on entering the parlor, which was situated between our chamber and that of our parents, that one of the costly candelabra which had graced our mantelpiece was standing on the window ledge. On looking round we saw that the companion candelabra and the beautiful clock were missing!

We hastened to rouse Papa, who, alarmed at our tale, started to dress in a hurry. But where were his clothes? Gone! His coat, trousers, and vest, with gold watch and chain attached, all had been stolen, together with many other articles. His room had been thoroughly ransacked! We sent at once for our landlord with no very pleasant anticipations, for we expected to be severely taxed by him, as he had warned us against sleeping with our windows open. But to our great surprise we found him most concerned and sympathetic about the loss of Papa's watch and wearing apparel. He seemed anxious to help us in every way to recover the stolen goods, and proposed to go with us to the Monte de Pietà, where he said we might easily find some of the missing things in pawn. We did so, spending the whole day in going from place to place in what proved to be a vain quest.

What puzzled us beyond everything was our landlord's easy attitude regarding his loss, which certainly exceeded our own very considerably!

"Ought you not to put the matter into the hands of the police?" we asked.

"It would do no good," was the reply. "It would en-tail no end of bother and expense, and we should get no satisfaction from it in the end!"

This did not seem right to us, but as we did not know how to go about it there seemed to be nothing to do but let the matter drop.

The mystery of the candelabra on the window-ledge was cleared up later on learning from Ferraro that a certain law student who lodged opposite us — and who had, since our arrival, bestowed more attention on our comings and goings than on the study of law — on returning home late on the night of the robbery, became aware that our apartment had been entered, whereupon he fired his revolver, the report of which frightened the thieves into a precipitate escape leaving part of their booty behind them.

There was a sequel to this adventure which I may as well relate now. A few weeks later we saw in the morning paper an account of "the startling discovery" that a certain collector of art treasures, so called, had turned out to be not only a receiver of stolen goods, but also one who kept in his employ a number of sneak thieves and burglars, all of whom acted under his orders and by his direction. The sudden death of the man, who lived alone and had apparently no one belonging to him, led to an investigation of his affairs and an examination of his effects. All sorts of valuables had been unearthed which had mysteriously disappeared and had never been traced, stowed away in every kind of unlikely place. As one item, they came upon a small wine barrel containing hundreds of gold rings, — many of them set with precious stones. Imagine the shock it was to us to find that the deceased was no other than our obliging landlord.

It now became quite clear that with the design to relieve us of our property the old rascal pretended to have his own valuables stolen — as a blind — with the understanding that his hirelings should simply transfer them to other quarters. The shot fired by our watchful neighbor opposite had interrupted the performance and saved the rest of us from having our chambers entered.

We certainly had good reason to feel grateful to our neighbor, with whom, however, we had no personal acquaintance, although he had made friends with the twins, who went frequently on excursions with him, returning home laden with fruits and confections. He must have been a very romantic youth and have had a strange passion for mysterious adventure, for he could easily have asked Ferraro, with whom he was acquainted, to introduce him, but he evidently preferred to watch and to follow us always keeping at a little distance. When we went to the swimming baths, we always found him waiting outside when we emerged, but he never ventured to approach us.

The most daring thing he ever attempted was to throw a billet attached to a bullet into our chamber, just as we were entering it for the night. As no doubt he was watching from his own darkened apartment, he had the mortification of seeing me pick it up and without detaching the letter from the bullet, return to the parlor and hand it to Papa, who had not yet retired. Papa frowned and smiled alternately, for, at least, he was convinced that I had no desire to encourage an intrigue with the "dangerous" young man opposite. This episode is interesting as an instance of the Italian preference for mystery, romance, and intrigue rather than legitimate acquaintance with the temporary object of his — what shall I call it? — infatuation?

CHAPTER XII

CHOLERA IN NAPLES — A SPEEDY RETURN TO MOLFETTA — A STRANGE RECEPTION — THE MYSTERIOUS PRIEST AGAIN — FRIENDS TO THE RESCUE — IN QUARANTINE AT BARI — MOLFETTA ONCE MORE — A TOUCHING INCIDENT — A BRILLIANT OPERA SEASON — ENGAGEMENT AT NAPLES — TEATRO BELLINI — LUCIA IN FLAMES — LUCIA EXTINGUISHES AND DISTINGUISHES HERSELF — REFLECTIONS

IT was with great reluctance that Papa tore himself away from the charms of Naples, but the time had come for him to return to England, and he had to leave us to our own devices.

Soon after his departure an epidemic of cholera broke out. It was raging in our street, and we had the gruesome experience of seeing its victims carried out daily in numbers. The city authorities were aroused by it from their torpor, and street scavengers were in evidence everywhere. Bushel baskets of uncanny-looking crustacea were seized by the police and ruthlessly dumped into the bay, and cart loads of delicious ripe figs, luscious grapes, and watermelons shared a like fate. Alas, for our poor tip-cart men!

Our friends in Molfetta, who had zealously corresponded with us during our sojourn in Naples, urged that we should anticipate our return to Molfetta, as there had been no cases of cholera reported there, owing, they wrote, to the scrupulous cleanliness of both streets and dwellings, which had been enforced since the beginning of the Naples scourge. They added that as no quarantine had been ordered for people arriving from Naples there would be no difficulty about our entering the town. Our apartment, they added, had been made ready for us. As their advice seemed sound, we lost no time in acting on it, and with the aid of the faithful Ferraro we settled up our affairs in Naples and started on our journey — this time in broad daylight — through the terrible Valley of Bovino.

On arriving at the Molfetta station a strange scene greeted us. A number of people with flaming torches stood awaiting us on the platform. They waved and shouted at us, "Do not descend! Stay where you are! Go on to Bari." Imagine our bewilderment and distress! We knew not what to do! There we stood with the railway carriage door wide open, bags in hand, expecting to be received with open arms by our friends, and instead we were told to go to Bari! Just as the train was about to start, two of our friends jumped into our compartment, telling us not to be alarmed; they were to accompany us to Bari and would explain on the way their strange proceeding.

They told us that as soon as the news of our speedy return from Naples was spread in Molfetta, an order was given for us to remain for three days in quarantine before entering the town. Whereupon Don Mauro (the inevitable Don Mauro!) had promptly prepared his country house for our reception with the intention of putting it at our disposal during the period of quarantine. This information was given us with the greatest excitement, as if some enormity had been committed!

"Well," I said, "but that was very thoughtful and kind of Don Mauro, although we should not have accepted his hospitality."

"Kind? You do not see the point!" they exclaimed desperately. "It was Don Mauro who put the authorities up to ordering quarantine that he might take advantage of it to get you under his roof. It was a trap! Don't you understand? We could not let you fall into it unawares, and that is why we took this course to save you. It was the only way, for had you descended from the train at Molfetta it would have been too late, for Don Mauro had everything arranged, and you could not have evaded his advances without some public scandal, whereas by going on to Bari, you quietly circumvent his intrigue without a word."

Of course we could not but feel very grateful to our friends for all the trouble they had taken in our behalf, but I could not help thinking that they were exaggerating the whole thing! I had never really believed that Don Mauro meant any harm; it was much more reasonable to suppose that as an ardent lover of the opera he wished to take this opportunity to pay us an attention which his priestly garb would, under ordinary circumstances, have enabled us to accept with perfect propriety. Our sensational friends, however, were firm in their belief that it was a hideous plot to get us into his power!

Then followed a few days of discomfort at Bari and of some anxiety too, for Mamma was seized with an attack of what we feared might be cholera. It turned out, however, that her illness was simply the effect of the agitation she had suffered.

When the time came for us to return to Molfetta it seemed like going home again. We remained there at leisure for a couple of weeks before preparations for the opera season commenced, during which time we were much entertained by our hospitable friends.

I am impelled to narrate one little circumstance which attests once again the peculiar, reverential attitude of Italians towards singers whose breeding and morals put them on a different plane from the usual variety with which they were most familiar, because at the time I remember how it touched me! We went one day to the Cathedral with some friends who wanted us to see one or two of the private chapels belonging to certain of their best families. On entering one of these I commented on the very unusual altar cloth, which instead of being of lace or embroidery was of some plain woollen material.

In answer to my remark some one said, "Don't you recognize it? It is the cloth which was thrown over the bier on which you were carried on to the stage in the last act of 'La Vestale.' After you left Molfetta the owners of this chapel purchased the cloth and placed it in this sacred place out of their reverential feeling for you!"

This was really too much for me! I was always able to swallow as much flattery as most people without wincing, but this mute expression of respect and devotion touched me strangely! While it went to my heart, it also made me feel a bit humble, for it was difficult for me to understand what I had ever done to merit it. Why should such a tribute be paid me simply because I happened to be myself and not somebody else? However, I understand it better now than I did then! And I think it tells well for human nature that down in its depths, beneath all the stubble of circumstance, there rests an Ideal of Right-doing which asserts itself when anything occurs to arouse it.

As soon as our operatic company was assembled we commenced rehearsals for the winter season. Sansone, the baritone of tragedy, being no longer with us, I had the privilege of selecting some of the operas that I wanted to sing, such as "La Sonnambula," "Lucia," "I Puritani," "Linda di Chamounix," to which the management added "Crispino e la Comare," "Tutti in Maschera" by Pedrotti, "Don Pasquale" and a number of other operas. It was a source of great gladness to me that Rosamond, whose opportunities had been so few, would at last have a chance to sing in a number of good contralto parts, which she did with infinite credit to herself.

It was a brilliant season. Every one allowed that there had been none to equal it — much less surpass it. We had an admirable director of orchestra, and I must confess that never, before or since, have I heard a more perfect "ensemble" than at our modest little opera house at Molfetta! So great a sensation was produced by some of our operas, notably "La Sonnambula" and "Lucia," that numbers of people from Bari, Trani and Barletta clamored for standing room in our auditorium. The fact that our box and seat-holders were so frequently called on to sell their rights to outsiders gave rise to the prolongation of the run of certain operas beyond the appointed time.

One day, as our season was drawing to a close, our impresario, Perroni, came to me with a new proposition. He said he had a scheme which would be the means of redeeming his fortune and putting him on his feet again, if only I would help him to carry it out. It was to start a spring season in Naples, at the Teatro Bellini, with the tenor Trappani and myself for the principals, — giving "Rigoletto," "Sonnambula," and "Lucia."

Trappani, he said, had already given his consent, conditional to mine. So confident was he that such a company as he proposed to form would draw the public and be an assured financial success, that both Trappani and I could well afford to accept a certain percentage of the gross receipts in lieu of a fixed salary, which he under his present pecuniary conditions felt he had no right to offer. Perroni had all along shown himself to be such a good fellow and we wished him so well that it would have been hard to refuse him this opportunity to recuperate. Besides, the prospect of singing in Naples was most alluring, it being such an important center for opera.

Accordingly, with the coming of spring we betook ourselves once more to Naples and there took up our quarters in an apartment vastly superior to that of the last summer, aside from the fact that it was not furnished with stolen goods!

The Teatro Bellini was a large theater and a very good one to sing in. We opened with "Rigoletto," and as Perroni had predicted, the public filled the house to its full capacity every night. Both Trappani and I were anticipating pleasantly the nice fat sum that each one of us would be receiving every week in percentages, when lo! — the unexpected happened! When it became evident that the financial success of the season was assured, Perroni's creditors united in taking legal proceedings which resulted in receivers being stationed at the door and box office so that not one cent of the profits found its way into poor Perroni's pocket. Murmurs of complaint were heard in the company, but they were told to be patient and all would be well later, — after the debts were paid. I, for my part, made no complaint whatever, for I felt the artistic stimulus incidental to my success to be so great that the dearth of filthy lucre was of minor importance! Trappani seemed to feel the same way; he also realized that such a successful engagement at the Bellini would be the means of raising his rank in the operatic world.

Something occurred during the season which taught me that we know actually nothing whatever about ourselves as we really are; of what we are capable of doing under pressure or in extreme emergencies, to what heights we may rise or to what depths we may fall under certain given conditions! I had always harbored a strong impression that I was without physical courage; that if any real danger confronted me I should "cave right in." I remembered that on hearing an account of a good woman who, when her house was on fire, ran frantically to a bureau drawer, seized a flannel petticoat and flew out of the house with it — it being the one thing she could think of to rescue from destruction — I said to myself, "That is just the sort of silly thing I should be likely to do! I am sure I should lose my head completely under similar circumstances, just like that woman!" How far I was mistaken will appear in what I am about to tell.

I was singing one night in "Lucia." It was near the end of the second act, when the unhappy Lucia, in bridal array, is confronted by her lover to whom she had plighted her troth and receives from him the violent malediction which robs her later of her reason. The stage business required me to rush forward in my despair — with arms outstretched — the entire chorus at my heels. A draught set up by the rush caused my long tulle veil to flutter, thereby attracting the flames from the footlights. In an instant I was in a blaze! My tulle overskirt had caught fire! The chorus and all the others, panic-stricken, rushed from the stage. I remained there standing alone! It came to me suddenly, out of the clear, that fire should be smothered. A shawl, a wrap, a cloth, anything to envelop oneself in was the thing. But there was no shawl, no wrap, — no anything within reach! Luckily, under my tulle overdress was a full white satin skirt. I stood stock-still, and taking hold of the two sides of my ample skirt, brought the folds together from the waist downward to prevent the flames from mounting to my neck and face. After pressing the folds of satin into the flames for a moment I opened them a little to see if the fire was crushed out. No, there was still a little red streak visible. Quickly I closed them again, squeezing them tight together; then once more I looked; the fire was extinguished, and I was unhurt! It was the work of an instant! And I had remained as cool as if nothing had happened!

"By Jove! that is plucky!" came in a slow, deliberate and unmistakably English voice from the rear of the theater. This brought me to the consciousness that there was a world outside of myself, — this English voice proceeding from the midst of a thoroughgoing Neapolitan audience. I now realized the plight I was in and the strange figure I presented, with my bridal dress a charred rag, and with a wreath of orange blossoms intact on my head, — standing still in front of the footlights, the observed of all observers! I noticed a series of black-trousered legs protruding from the boxes of the first tier. Good souls! What good could they have hoped to do me? They could not have reached the stage in time! The impulse to do something, however, was very natural, the action instinctive.

In another moment the masses, who had held their breath under the fascination of suspense, burst forth with unbridled shouts of wild enthusiasm. The curtain came down while the deafening clamor was at its height and I vainly trying to escape to my dressing room, for what with the chorus, the company, and all the stage hands crowding round me, and the inopportune insistence of the audience to keep me longer in sight, it was fully fifteen minutes before I was permitted to shed my unsightly garments. I had to laugh, and laugh hysterically, when I caught sight of my reflection in the mirror. That immaculate bridal wreath on my head capped the climax of incongruity! (From that time forward I never sang in "Lucia" without my dear little mother standing in the wings with a thick woollen shawl ready to throw over me!)

When, having donned a white muslin *peignoir* and let my hair down I appeared again in the mad scene, what a storm of applause greeted me! I was so overcome that I could hardly stand, but had to lean up against one of the proscenium boxes. Although I certainly had no cause to complain of the reception the public had given me during the whole of my engagement, it was forcibly borne in upon me that as a "singed cat" I was a greater success than as a prima donna!

It interests me even now to ponder over my peculiar state of mind during that supreme moment of danger when every second counted! Was my utter fearlessness — my calm, clear vision of what to do — really the result of courage? I am afraid not! I still incline to believe that I am but a timid creature! My diagnosis of the situation is that the Law of Necessity, the instinct of self-preservation, or whatever we may please to call it, sharpened my wits to such a fine point that no other thought could enter my mind; that the whole of my being was so completely concentrated in one single purpose that doubt or fear could find no place in my consciousness. There was instinctive will and action; for me, at that moment, nothing else existed, — neither theater nor onlookers. Only flames and myself; and these to be dealt with!

That night no sleep visited my eyelids. The whole scene was rehearsed over and over again as I lay wide awake in my bed. Those creeping, snake-like flames that wooed me to their embrace; the awful silence, the aloneness on that vast stage, that English voice: "By Jove, that is plucky," and the deafening din of applause which followed, — all these things with their accompanying sensations were constantly repeated by my excited nerves until my poor brain could hold no more, and I mercifully lost consciousness.

CHAPTER XIII

PAOLO ROTONDO — SONATAS AND STRING QUARTETS — MY OWN QUARTET ONCE MORE — AN OFFER FROM "SAN CARLO" — THE CEDING OF A CONTRACT — DÉBUT AT THE SAN CARLO — JOINED BY OUR FATHER — REFLECTIONS ON INSOMNIA — AN UNAVOIDABLE SACRIFICE — SHATTERED HOPES — CHOLERA AGAIN — STARTING FOR HOME — QUARANTINE AT FREUIL — CHATEAU D'IF — ENGLAND ONCE MORE — BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL — JOHN F. BARNETT'S "ANCIENT MARINER" — CHELTENHAM AGAIN — MIXED FEELINGS — HOMESICK FOR ITALY

ONE of the friendships formed by us in Naples that claims the first place in my memory is that of Paolo Rotondo, a near relative of our Molfettese friend, the Governor, Don Tommaso Pannunzio. He was different from any Italians we had known, possessing nothing of their expansiveness and ready excitability. His was a nature exquisitely sensitive, in expression reserved, in taste innately refined and artistic. Being a man of property and of the aristocracy, a bachelor and consequently freefooted, he had plenty of leisure to devote to the fine arts. So he had cultivated a natural musical talent, making himself acquainted with the deeper music of the great old masters, — with the value of which he had become thoroughly imbued. He was one of the most distinguished among the musical amateurs of Naples, his violoncello playing being adjudged masterly. It had been for years his custom to get together with the two leading violins and viola of the superb San Carlo Orchestra in his charming home to play together the String Quartets of Beethoven and the other classics for their own pleasure, — without any audience. What with those "seances" and the possession of a rare musical library it is not a matter of wonder that he had made himself familiar with all that was best in music, and had in consequence lost, in great measure, his interest in the more superficial effects of Italian opera.

I think that this interesting person was not particularly inclined — at the offset — to cultivate our acquaintance, in spite of the favorable accounts of us received from his uncle and other relatives in Molfetta! He was doubtless wise enough to considerably discount their panegyrics! Moreover, there remained the glaring fact that we were Italian opera singers and therefore in all probability ignorant, not only of all other schools of music, but also of music itself, and consequently to him uninteresting candidates for homage. Nevertheless, he was polite enough to call on us after the first performance of the "Rigoletto," concealing as well as he could the fact that he regarded it as just a "duty call." We divined, however, the true feeling which lurked under his perfect manner, and having been thoroughly informed of his rarefied tastes from his admiring relatives in Molfetta, we took in the situation perfectly, — chuckling quietly to ourselves at the surprise we might give him. In the course of the conversation, Rosamond and I alluded with regret to the absence in Italy of any appreciation of the classic German music which had formed the bone and sinew of our musical education in Germany. The striking of that keynote led naturally to the revelation of many of the features of our life in the music world antedating our operatic career. When he realized that we understood and loved the things he loved, his whole attitude towards us changed completely, and from that time forward we became the greatest of friends. He invited us to his quartet "seances," where we were the only guests in his musical "Holy of Holies," and later he even did me the honor to perform my humble Quartet for strings which he and his colleagues most graciously approved!

Nearly every afternoon we played together sonatas for piano and violoncello, he leaving one of his instruments at our apartment to facilitate any spontaneous impulse we might have for a musical orgy. There was something charmingly incongruous in the playing of Beethoven Sonatas by day and in singing "La Sonnambula" and "Lucia" by night, — in Naples, too, of all places in the world! Until those afternoons with Paolo Rotondo I had not realized how starved I had been for lack of a musical element that was actually a part of my very being! The keen enjoyment I experienced in playing Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann once more, after so long an interim, revealed to me how much the deeper music meant — had always meant — would always mean to me! How vital was the craving for it underneath all the glamour of Italian opera!

Our intercourse with Paolo Rotondo was not, however, wholly confined to music. There were many excursions to the countless lovely spots about the Bay of Naples and its suburbs, and pleasant picnics at his beautiful country house. How different was our life to that of our last summer in Naples! Was it really the same city? It was hard to realize it! Paolo

Rotondo was not our only friend there, however; there were other agreeable people who frequented our society, but none so near to us, — none who held the place in our regard that he did!

When our operatic performances at the Bellini had been in progress nearly a month Perroni appeared one morning at our apartment in quite a state of excitement.

"Something unexpected has happened, — something very important to you!" he began. "The San Carlo people want you and Trappani!"

I was struck dumb for the moment; then I spluttered out, "What do you mean? What can they want of us? There is never opera at the San Carlo in summer!"

"True," he replied, "but this summer they have got it into their heads that they want to make an exception to the rule and announce a summer season, provided they can secure you and Trappani. The fact is," he continued, "they have had their eye on my Bellini company ever since our season opened, and the large houses we have had evidently suggested the probability of a successful season for them at the San Carlo, provided they could offer the same attraction. Their plan is to play 'Sonnambula' and 'Lucia' — the operas with which our greatest hits have been made — and they have approached me with the proposition to cede my contract with you and Trappani to them, — for a consideration. Of course, they know that I personally am getting nothing out of it, save *kudos*, thanks to my grasping creditors!"

"And what do you intend to do about it?" I asked anxiously.

"Well, *Cara mia*, I could not think of putting any difficulties in the way of your advancement after all your goodness to me. It is such a wonderful opportunity for you! Think what it means to sing at the San Carlo — the theater which ranks highest of all the opera houses in Italy — at this early stage in your career! Think what engagements in other theaters of high rank may follow the prestige of it! Even were it a real sacrifice on my part, I should feel that I ought to make it for your sake and also for that of Trappani, who has been equally considerate for me!"

I was lost in my reflections on the new vista thus opened to me and could say nothing!

"What I have come to convey to you is," he continued, "that you are to feel free to enter into any negotiations with the San Carlo people that you may see fit!"

How wonderful it all seemed! To sing at the San Carlo — and in my two favorite operas! It was almost too good to be true! My imagination began to take flight, and I saw myself launched among the artistic élite in the operatic world!

The San Carlo Committee called on me next day and laid their project before me. This was the plan they had worked out. Solo performers, orchestra, chorus and every one belonging to the theater — even to the stage hands — were to contribute their service in return for a prospective "pro rata" proportion of the weekly proceeds. Perhaps a level-headed business man might have foreseen some difficulties ahead in such an arrangement, but I, for my part — knowing nothing, and caring less about business — did not trouble my head about financial results. The fact that I was really to sing at the San Carlo was all I cared about! Meanwhile, it was reasonable to suppose that if Trappani and all the rest of them were satisfied with the venture there was no reason why I should not embark in it likewise.

The Teatro Bellini accordingly was closed at short notice, and we commenced rehearsals of "La Sonnambula" with the San Carlo orchestra. (It happened, by the way, that a few months later the Bellini was entirely destroyed by fire.)

I shall never forget my feelings of elation on my first appearance in that splendid opera house. The acoustic properties surpassed anything I had ever experienced! When I sang into that vast auditorium, instead of feeling that I must exert myself to fill it, my voice seemed to flow out of itself, with an ease that was a joy to me; returning to me so clear and resonant — seeming to have doubled in power — that I was in the seventh heaven! All the circumstances of my engagement made me feel very happy. My ambition was roused almost to the height of my artistic aspiration, which had never been asleep. There was a large and responsive audience, evidently enjoying the smooth excellent ensemble and perfect balance of the performance. Mamma, Rosamond and the boys were proudly glowing with satisfaction, and even Paolo Rotondo, despite his deprecation of Bellini, was quite demonstrative, — for him!

About a week later we began rehearsals of "Lucia," performances of which were to alternate with those of the "Sonnambula," till the end of the season. Just then Papa arrived at Naples for his summer vacation in time to hear both operas as often as he pleased, and this time apparently there was nothing for him to criticize, and he felt no irritation at my "lack of dramatic force," as at Florence. Since that time I had indeed "found myself," thanks to the wise counsel of Sansone at Molfetta, and could no longer be accused of tameness.

I recall, with regret, a bad habit that I indulged in at that time, of lying awake after each performance and mentally going through my part in a sort of ecstatic frame of mind. Different phrases with their various nuances repeated themselves subjectively over and over again, at last unbidden, and I would try in vain to quiet those haunting strains which at first had yielded me such ecstasy. This grew gradually into such a habit of mind that to this day, as soon as my head touches the pillow, it is the signal for a hyper-mental excitement leading to insomnia which I, in my ignorance, permitted to get the better of me in that way. Therefore, I warn any enthusiastic young artists who may be inclined to indulge in that kind of mental orgy — and I take it for granted that there must be other unwary ones besides myself — not to permit such a temptation to allure them. Bed is a good place to sleep in and not a proper one either to rehearse operas or to chew the operatic cud!

And now, in the midst of the elation of my success and my glorified sojourn in Naples, of my just anticipations of a brilliant operatic career to materialize in the near future, came the saddest part of my story. At least, the saddest for me! My mother had been growing ever more and more anxious about the twins. Their education was being utterly neglected. They were leading a life of unalloyed pleasure, associating with the members of our company, who petted and spoiled the bright little lads, by whose precocity and amusing talk they were fascinated. Their familiarity with all sorts of things that should remain a sealed book to young boys was something appalling, while their utter ignorance of all that a British mother holds dearest and most desirable in the upbringing of youth was equally so. My mother could not bear the idea of their losing all trace of their nationality and merging into Italian ways and Italian morals. Charming, joyous, happy-go-lucky little lads as they now were, what was their future outlook?

With the advent of my father the problem was gravely discussed between them. Many and diverse were the tentative alternatives proposed by one or the other of us. Might they not be sent to England with my father and put to school there? But my poor little mother could not bring herself to contemplate so complete a separation from her dearest, last-born young. She was broken-hearted at the bare idea of it! She had borne with such patience the many discomforts of a prolonged nomadic life in foreign countries and was yearning so intensely for a home of her own in her native land once more, that both Rosamond and I agreed we ought not to stand selfishly in the way of her happiness any longer. We realized only too well that the whole of our family had been sacrificed to our artistic aspirations for years beyond the allotted time, and that it was now our turn to make some sacrifice. And a bitter sacrifice indeed it was! For well we knew that to leave Italy at that time was a death blow to our operatic career. But it had to be. We must all return to England together. There was no other way! "What a pity, what a pity!" rang in our ears perpetually; our friends could regard the decree in no other light. It found indeed an echo in my own heart.

As soon as my engagement at the San Carlo terminated, we were to start for home. "Home" meant nothing to me now! How dull and profitless everything seemed! There was no longer even the same elation in singing and being applauded. What was the good of it all, destined as it was to come to an untimely end? Nothing mattered any more!

One day the Principessa C. called on us. So unheard-of a thing was it in Italy for any great lady to call on an opera singer that we could of course only attribute her visit to her regard for Paolo Rotondo, whose friendship for us he must have made known to her. At any other time I should have felt immensely flattered, but now I did not care. It was a matter of perfect indifference to me! I think my feelings must have been akin to those on one's deathbed, when the coils of life, ambition and striving have loosened and fallen away; when the past is past, the present nothing, and the future a blank!

It was stiflingly hot in Naples at that time. We did not dare to stir out of doors while the sun was high in the heavens. We could only lie prone on our couches with nothing on but a single garment of the most diaphanous material, keeping up a constant and liberal sprinkling of water on the stone floors of our rooms. I felt like a washed-out rag! It was an effort to move — to dress — to go to the opera, and it was only when I found myself on the stage that some of the old fire came back from sheer force of habit.

Then was Naples again visited by the cholera, though not in such full force as the preceding summer, but still, there it was! So it seemed expedient for us to start on our journey without delay as soon as I was free. The only relic I carried with me from Naples was a poster on which the name of Clara Doria was conspicuous in six-inch letters, — the only material evidence I possessed that I had ever been "starred," and the only material reminder of my career as an opera singer in Italy!

We were not permitted to land at Marseilles, having sailed from Naples, where cholera was active, but were detained in quarantine for several days at Freuil, a barren little island, as I remember it, — bald, rocky, and gray in aspect; its principal feature the wondrous transparency of its waters. One could see clearly to the bottom and watch all that was going on in its depths. In our quarters we looked toward the Chateau D'If where Monte Cristo was imprisoned and whence he was cast down into the sea tied up in a sack. I used to gaze at the chateau and wonder from which of its turret windows he was thrown, and also marvel that his executioners could have failed to see in that transparent water his wonderful performance of ripping up the sack with a knife as it touched the water, his extricating himself and swimming for dear life. Nothing else during our journey made any impression on me. It has all remained a blank!

On reaching our native shores, instead of going direct to Cheltenham, we made a halt at Birmingham in order to be present at the great Musical Festival of August, 1867, where a cantata by our cousin, John Francis Barnett, composed to the text of Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" was to be performed for the first time, under magnificent auspices. The soloists were: Titiens, soprano; Sims Reeves, tenor; Patey, contralto; and Santley, baritone. With such a galaxy of artists in addition to the superb Birmingham Festival Chorus and Orchestra, no wonder that it was a great performance! Titiens was truly a noble singer in every sense of the word. In her one found the rare combination of a fine declamatory singer equally excellent in both smooth, sustained, and florid music. The only one of more recent times that I can cite as belonging to the same type is Lili Lehmann. How her noble voice rang out in the solo with chorus "The Seraph Band," in which she sustained C sharp in alt with an unsurpassed purity and security of tone.

Having always heard Sims Reeves cited as the "Idol of the British Public," I was most eager to hear him. But he was one of those uncertain quantities whom no one could ever feel sure that he was going to hear when he was advertised to sing at a concert. He suffered from some nervous affection of the throat which led to his backing out at the last moment, five times out of six, and the ever-ready, reliable Edward Lloyd being announced to sing in his place. As our cousin, John, had told us ruefully in the morning that Sims Reeves had found the recitatives too high for his voice and wanted him to alter them, we thought it probable that he would balk at the last, and we really had but little hope of hearing him. However, he braced up after all, and John and the rest of them said never sang better! I confess I was not as much carried away by his voice as I had expected to be. There was something in the quality of his tone which to my ears savored slightly of throatiness. I found later, however, on hearing a number of English tenors in London, that all of them had more or less of that same spongy quality and that it was accepted by the British public as the proper thing, — in fact as the National Tenor Voice.

Our cousin surely scored a triumph on that occasion. His cantata was acclaimed enthusiastically by an enormous audience, and the joy and pride of his adoring parents and flock of sisters was something not easily forgotten. John himself had mellowed considerably since the Leipzig days when he practised finger exercises absent-mindedly on the table and made "artificial irrigation" the subject of light conversation! His really high standing in the musical world had lifted him to a superior state of self-consciousness. It was pleasant to grasp the hand of Santley again and pleasant to be introduced by him to Sims Reeves, Titiens and the others, and to note the respect and consideration that all seemed to feel for Papa, — a consideration and interest that extended in a measure to us as his daughters. Altogether the Birmingham Festival was an agreeable episode that made me feel not quite so low in my mind as when we started on our homeward journey.

On arriving at Cheltenham we were received with open arms by Aunt Mary and Domenico in the little home which my father had made for them and himself during our wanderings. There was at first a little glow of something like happiness in a mild form. I tried to call up some of the tender memories of childhood and succeeded so well that for the time being all the years — all the events that had intervened — were like a mere dream.

Rosamond and I were eager to visit some of the old landmarks. Nothing had changed except that the streets, buildings, shops, everything seemed to have shrunk and faded. We took a walk up to Pittville Spa, which we remembered as such an imposing building set in beautiful grounds, replete with magnificent trees and luxuriant shrubs, and approached by a grand promenade. How provincial and how insignificant it all looked! The soft undulating hills over which we had roamed in childhood and the Malvern hills which loomed up in full view from Lechampton suggested toy mountains. We had since seen the Swiss and Italian Alps! That was what ailed us! Nevertheless, as we returned to these fair hills, there swept over us a rush of tender memories, and I felt a lump in my throat.

The first few weeks of our homecoming were uneventful, except for a visit from some of our cousins from London. I made an effort to render their sojourn with us a pleasant one, but try as I would I could put no heart into anything. Life had become mechanical. There was a starved feeling somewhere in the region of my heart. I missed the warm, expansive natures born of sunny Italy. I missed their joyousness, their simple, almost childlike ways, I missed the free outspokenness of friendly intercourse that had meant so much to us, and above all I missed the feeling that they *cared*, — that they were interested.

In Cheltenham there was no one who cared. All those whom we came across seemed cold and matter-of-fact, expressing an interest that was pumped up. I had never in my life experienced homesickness, but now I understood the feeling only too well, — I was homesick for Italy! I sometimes wondered how Domenico could stand it. He, however, had not lived in Italy. Besides, he had acquired a new interest of his own. Having formed an intimate friendship with a very clever artist named Brough, he had taken up painting as an avocation with ardor and enthusiasm. The talent for it that he developed was so marked that I have since held the opinion that Nature really fashioned him for a painter, and that his becoming a musician instead was due to the fact that he happened to be born into a family whose destiny was music. He had to follow the flock!

PART IV

EXPERIENCES IN THE MUSICAL AND SOCIAL WORLDS OF ENGLAND AND AMERICA

CHAPTER I

HOME AGAIN — PROSPECTIVE ENGAGEMENT AT "HER MAJESTY'S THEATER" — "LA SONNAMBULA" IN DUBLIN — A WARM FRIEND — LADY J. — AN AMUSING EPISODE — A LIVELY AUDIENCE — LIVERPOOL — THE ENGLISH PUBLIC — ANNOUNCED AT "HER MAJESTY'S THEATER" — A FATAL MISTAKE — FRUSTRATED HOPES — DÉBUT IN "THE ANCIENT MARINER" — ILL AT EASE — LONDON CONCERTS — MERETRICIOUS SYSTEMS — OLD FRIENDSHIPS RENEWED

THE next thing to be considered was how best to start our professional career in London. Was it likely that there would be any chance for us in opera among the number of celebrities who held positions both at Covent Garden and Her Majesty's Theater?

My father wrote to Colonel Mapleson, telling him of our career in Italy and sending him, in addition to some press notices, my treasured poster, that he might see for himself how I had been starred at the San Carlo. His letter was answered promptly by Mapleson, who, rather to our surprise, favored the idea of my making an appearance at Her Majesty's. The question of terms then arose and our demand was pronounced quite satisfactory. In a postscript Mapleson said that he was starting on a tour with certain members of his company, including Madame Titiens, and he would like very much to have me join them at Dublin for a performance of "La Sonnambula" if I would care to do so. I assented gladly and at the appointed time betook myself to Dublin with Mamma as my escort.

On arriving at Dublin the hotel manager handed me a little pile of cards inscribed with the name of Lady K. J. He told me that since my name had appeared on the opera bills her Ladyship had called every day to inquire if I had arrived, having explained her eagerness to see me by confiding to him that she had known my father and had a deep regard for him.

My début was appointed for the following night. I had been resting my voice for several days, having learned by experience that I was always at my best after doing so. I had planned to keep very quiet all day pending the performance; but to my discomfiture scarcely had Mamma and I breakfasted when her Ladyship appeared on the scene. After she had greeted us with a warmth fitting an old friendship rather than a new acquaintance — holding me at arm's length with, "Let me look at you and see how handsome you are" — she proceeded to take me into her confidence in so intimate a way that I came at once to the conclusion that Lady J. was a "character." "Me dear," she began (she had a delightful little suggestion of a brogue!), "I have come all the way from Kingstone to see you. My husband does not approve of theaters, you know, and if I had told him what I was going to do he would have prevented me. So, me dear, I ran away, as I was determined that nothing should stop me from hearing you sing to-night. I have bought a seat in the gallery where no one will recognize me in these plain clothes."

"But won't Sir K. be anxious when he misses you and follow you up?" I hazarded.

"No matter if he does, me dear, I shall have had my way; I shall have been present at your début! Here I am now, and you will have to put up with me all day, me dear, but I shall try not to bother you!" Well, of course, I had to make the best of it. But really her beaming face and warm lovable nature affected me so pleasantly that I could not find it in my heart to chafe at her presence.

Lady J. was a woman of about fifty, of medium height, her figure all rounds and curves, her face as smooth and rosy as an apple. Her somewhat dishevelled appearance did not convey the idea that she was of the nobility, though for a fact she was really of the blue blood of old Ireland. She did not hesitate to inform me that Sir K. was very religious and too strait-laced; and also that she did not share his views. I foresaw that there would be some fun in the course of the evening, and I was not disappointed!

The performance opened brilliantly. I was in excellent voice and I was made to repeat my first cavatina, "Come per me sereno." While I was bowing my acknowledgments there fell from above a large bouquet which hit me on the nose, much to the amusement of the audience. I at once had my suspicions! It could have been thrown by no other than Lady J.

At the end of the first act, after the curtain calls had ceased, who should come toddling on to the stage but her Ladyship. With arms outstretched, preparatory to an impetuous hug, she cried excitedly, "What a success! What a success! I'm so proud of you, me dear!" Then she added, without any lowering of the voice, "Did I do it right? Did I throw it at the right moment, me dear?" Imagine my embarrassment! It must have seemed to the amused spectators, who could not be expected to know any better, that I had *hired* this good woman to throw me a bouquet!

At this moment Mapleson appeared on the stage accompanied by a tall, majestic and very aristocratic-looking gentleman, who turned out to be no other than the dreaded Sir K.! When he found that his wife was missing, shrewdly suspecting what had become of her, he had traced and followed her to the theater, sought out Mapleson and begged him to aid him in locating his truant wife.

Lady J. was nothing daunted at the sight of him, but smiled most amiably at Mapleson and her husband, as if their sudden intrusion had been part of the programme. As for Sir K., he pocketed his feelings, whatever they may have been, and comforted himself with the perfect urbanity of a true gentleman under circumstances which must have been exceedingly trying to any one of his rigid opinions! Meanwhile Mapleson, taking in the whole situation, and realizing that her Ladyship must not be allowed to return to her seat in the gallery, with infinite tact invited her and Sir K. to sit in his own proscenium box, where they remained during the rest of the performance in the company of Madame Titiens and himself.

I could picture Lady J. chuckling inwardly at having outwitted Sir K., whose good manners obliged him to gracefully submit not only to assisting at a tabooed performance, but also to disporting himself behind the scenes of an unholy theater! My private opinion, however, was that Sir K. secretly enjoyed this unpremeditated lapse from his strict principles!

The Dublin audience was a delight to me. Their responsiveness was almost as stimulating as that of an Italian audience, — when it was behaving well. It did not take itself so seriously as an Italian audience, but though by no means lacking in discrimination, it was always kindly and good-humored. The upper gallery was generally occupied exclusively by students from the Medical College, who were in the habit — as soon as an act was finished — of starting an entertainment of their own. This was the sort of thing.

"I say, Bob, I bet you could sing that song as well as 'Long Tom'" (that being their nickname for Tom Hohler, who was very tall).

"I bet I can!"

"Well, let's hear you do it!"

Upon which Bob would hold forth boldly with his version of the music, and the students would applaud him exactly as if he were on the stage. Their fun and deviltry between the acts, which mostly included a variety of witty remarks, was anticipated by the audience below stairs with the greatest gusto, and it had become quite a matter of course to the management that between the acts the students had right of way.

On the night after my début I attended the opera, and as soon as those imps spied me out in a box they commenced passing personal remarks quite freely among themselves and in anything but a stage whisper! Their humor and fun were irresistible! One simply *had* to laugh!

That night I heard Titiens for the first time in opera. What a grand voice! What a noble artist! What a privilege it was to hear her! I think, if I remember rightly, the opera was "Lucrezia Borgia," and Trebelli was the Orsini. What an admirable contralto she was! This little Dublin episode did much towards mitigating my homesick feeling for Italy. If only it could have continued!

Mapleson asked me to go with the company also to Liverpool and repeat "La Sonnambula" there, which I did. But what a contrast between a Dublin and a Liverpool public! One could get no inspiration from those respectable and matter-of-fact people! I always felt that there was something about an English audience which made their applause, even when lavish, convey no thrill of real satisfaction. They somehow never seemed to me to really vibrate to music! They listened intently and decorously and applauded when the proper time came because it was proper to do so. Any manifestation of enthusiasm — even for a great celebrity — seemed cut and dried rather than spontaneous. It never seemed to burst forth involuntarily, as though it welled up from a vital source. An artist of sensitive temperament could get no stimulus from it, but could feel only the bald satisfaction of being considered important enough for approval.

On our return to Cheltenham we began at once to prepare for a season in London, for of course the Metropolis was to be our future headquarters. It was arranged that the twins were to receive their much-needed English education at the London University College School. Mamma went to town to inspect a house on Gower Street, which, as it seemed to suit our needs, was duly rented by us. On her return from London she reported that on the posters of Her Majesty's Theater the name of "Clara Doria" was conspicuous, — billed for "La Sonnambula."

This news, which to me was most agreeable, for some unaccountable reason was received by Papa with indignation. "What right had Mapleson to announce me without having made any definite agreement about terms?" That was how he saw it! For my part, I thought it quite natural that Mapleson should want any hard and fast contract with a young singer like myself to depend on my reception by a London audience, feeling convinced that he would do the fair thing by me if I proved a success. In other words, I was quite willing to be "sampled." But alas, no argument of mine could prevent my irate father from writing a sharp letter to Mapleson, demanding of him on what ground he had taken upon himself to announce me as a member of his company, and begging him to observe that as matters stood he had no claim on me whatsoever! This peremptory letter was never answered, — the only notice taken of it being to remove my name from the opera bills.

I was in despair, realizing fully what a false step it was! My father also regretted his impetuosity when it was too late! He saw that his precipitate action had barred my operatic career in London for all time, for it was now plain to him that the sudden withdrawal of my name without explanation was open to the interpretation that I had been tried and found wanting! Moreover, that it would be vain to hope that an application to the rival manager of Covent Garden would be considered under the circumstances for a moment. How could he dare to propose that Gye should take on a "cast-off" prima donna of Mapleson?

On what a small thing does a singer's career but too often depend! Just a hasty letter! That was all that sufficed for my undoing! So my operatic aspirations had come to an untimely end, as I had foreshadowed, when we turned our backs on Italy. And now what remained for me? Nothing but to enter the ranks of concert singers. I had tasted the sweets of artistic exaltation only to be thrown into a musical vortex which I dreaded.

Meanwhile our cousin, John Francis Barnett, who was planning a grand performance of his cantata, "The Ancient Mariner," at St. James Hall, with an orchestra of eighty performers and a fine chorus of voices selected from the Crystal Palace Choir and Handel Festival Chorus, conceived the idea that the first appearance of the "Sorelle Doria," "fresh from a successful operatic career in Italy and daughters of John Barnett," would be a good card for him to play in attracting a larger audience, more particularly as the London Press had shown their consideration of my father by generously heralding the appearance of his daughters in the musical field. Accordingly, our cousin John persuaded us that there could be no happier or more appropriate occasion for our début on the concert stage than the one he offered us. There was a certain fitness and dignity in it which appealed to us, and so we accepted his proposition.

As soon as we settled in our newly appointed home at Number 84 Gower Street we made ready for our appearance in "The Ancient Mariner." Rosamond was to sing the contralto part, which was taken by Madame Patey at the Birmingham Festival, Santley was to be the baritone, Edward Lloyd the tenor, and it remained for poor little me, with my light soprano voice, to sing the music in which the full resonant tones of Titiens had pealed forth. How could I feel satisfied with myself, with the memory of that noble voice still fresh?

However, the performance on the whole was a success! The audience was large and enthusiastic, after the English fashion — that is, decorously and deliberately — and John, smothered in congratulations from his family and friends, was very happy. Rosamond came in for her full share of the honors, for her part lay well in her voice. As for me, I did not deceive myself for a moment regarding my own performance. I hated it! And had it not been for the second and miscellaneous part of the concert, in which I disported myself in the Bolero from the "Vesperi Siciliani" — in my own element once more — I should have looked upon my London début as little else than a sorry *succès d'estime!* But as a sort of reaction from the coils of "The Ancient Mariner" I let myself go in the Bolero and made up for lost time and opportunity by singing with a dash which surprised even myself, — so humble had I become since misfortune had overtaken me!

Following this introduction to the London public we, "the Sisters Doria," were caught up into the regular conventional routine of life which was our portion as concert singers. The fate of a fairly successful concert singer may not appear to the reader as an unhappy one or as anything to elicit complaint; nevertheless, at the time of which I am writing, such a life in London was artistically demoralizing, because one was forced to go with the current, and that current led inevitably to a fall from high ideals.

You may ask, to what this state of things might be attributed? First, I judged, because England is not inherently a musical nation, in spite of the fact that it has produced some highly equipped musicians. Second, that music was made a commercial commodity by an unholy trinity of composers, singers and publishers. I allude to the "royalty" system which did much toward lowering musical standards. When singers of prominence found that they could greatly augment their incomes by entering into an agreement with a given publisher and composer to place a certain song on every one of their miscellaneous concert programmes in consideration of receiving a percentage on the sale of every copy, they soon got to begrudge singing anything that did not pay, and consequently the musical value of a composition was gradually eliminated from their consideration. Thus ensued little by little the rule of the commonplace, — of cheap devices and meretricious effects in lieu of artistic interpretations of songs chosen for their musical value. This resulted inevitably in a constant levelling down of public taste, — the whole interest of an audience centring in the text of the song and the jingle of a refrain. Boosey's Ballad Concerts measured the high-water mark of their musical enjoyment.

I do not mean to insinuate that I have anything against ballad concerts, as such, or against the firm of Boosey and Company, or any other firm for using them as a means to popularize songs of their publication. Considered from a commercial standpoint these concerts were a perfectly legitimate institution, and while it filled their coffers and made the pockets of both composers and singers bulge with royalties, it also afforded a large proportion of the community a musical pabulum well suited to their tastes and to their limited powers of comprehension. But, from an educational or an artistic standpoint, one certainly could not uphold them. What the dime novel does in inhibiting a broad taste for literature, the ballad concert habit effects in limiting the musical sphere. To the ballad concert frequenters the songs of Schubert, Schumann and all compositions of the poetic and deeper order were simply caviar. And as the frequenters of those concerts often formed a part of other concert audiences, the effect of their presence was keenly felt by such artists as attempted to offer something of a higher order. There were just two things which seemed to be within the general comprehension, — the story told in the text of English song, and pyrotechnics when the text was in a foreign language. Between these two stools, Music, in its true sense, fell to the ground. But let me say that the above comments refer chiefly to the audiences of the then rampant miscellaneous "Benefit Concerts." The frequenters of the Oratorio Concerts, the Old and New Philharmonic Concerts and the "Monday Pops" were of a different mettle. They listened with patient interest and applauded loudly music of the most severely classic order. But while I fully appreciated the choice both of audiences and types of concerts offered in London, the inevitable Benefit Concerts were to me constantly as the pebble in the shoe!

From certain other points of view London life was not as dull and unprofitable as I expected it would be in contact with the cold, unexpansive English temperament. We were thrown together with many foreign artists of all nationalities, including a large proportion of Italians. Such interesting figures as Sir Michael Costa, Sivori, Tito Mattei, Pinsuti, Randegger, Adelina Patti, Joachim, Rubinstein, Wieniawski, Charles Halle, Norman Neruda, and a host of other distinguished artists flashed across our horizon. Then, there were our old friends of Leipzig days, Arthur Sullivan, Walter Bache, Madeline Schiller and Carl Rosa, who was now the husband of Parepa and who had substituted for his career of violinist that of orchestral director and manager of an English opera company, of which Parepa was the star. When they were not on tour we were constantly in friendly relations with the Parepa-Rosas.

She, Parepa, was very free and outspoken, very genial and very amusing, being extremely observant and endowed with a keen sense of humor.

Walter Bache had changed but little, except that he had outlived his Italian music *culte*, and had become a rampant devotee of Wagner and Liszt. He was a frequent visitor at our house and we resumed the old habit of making music together. I recall how one morning he appeared in our music room in a state of great excitement, having just seen for the first time a score of the "Rheingold." "It opens," he cried, "with a sustained chord in E as long as Great Portland Street!" He used from time to time to bring over songs and duets by Klintworth — for whom he had a great admiration and friendship — for us to sing. Bache's genuine enthusiasm and veneration for the beautiful in music — as he saw it — made him always a most interesting personality!

Arthur Sullivan had not changed much either. He was still the same sympathetic and ingratiating mortal, still as much of a courtier and a flirt as of yore. When he entertained us at dinner in the comfortable home he made with his mother, — a portly matron and adoring parent — he was a genial and charming host, most agreeable in conversation; but it would have been impossible for me, even in imagination, to galvanize the corpse of my hero-worship of old into life!

My friendship for Madeline Schiller also revived. She was the same rather languishing and sentimental creature, as amiable, graceful and gentle as ever So there was a certain variety in our lives which made London endurable if not exactly inspiring!

What troubled me most was that there was no *growth* in the life we were leading. The common routine of singing in two concerts a day, sometimes three; of being rushed in the afternoon from one hall to another to sing a duet or a song in the first part of one programme and some selection in the second part of the other, followed by a concert or a musical party in the evening, seemed to reach nowhere. I found my enthusiasm — my joy in singing — slipping away from me, a dull sameness of spirit taking its place.

Rosamond, however, seemed to take more kindly to the conditions than I, — being by nature more adaptable. She had a happy "What does it matter as long as they like it?" way of reasoning. When our duets and songs were encored she was satisfied with our success. Her lively temperament spared her from being a self-tormenter like myself, — constantly feeling that applause meant nothing when one's own musical conscience was sore. And mine was often, oh, so sore! In my own estimation I was no longer an artist, but only a professional singer! In those days, "Song Recitals" were not yet in vogue! If only they had been, how I should have hailed them as a saving grace!

CHAPTER II

LADY J. AGAIN — FRIEND AND CHAPERONE — DELIGHTFUL PARTIES — SIR ALEXANDER COCKBURN — MANUEL GARCIA — DION BOUCICAULT — A PET SCHEME FOILED — AN AMIABLE LION HUNTER — AN INDIAN PRINCE AND HIS COURT MUSICIANS — JULIUS BENEDICT — THE "MONDAY POPS" — FRIENDSHIPS — FREDERICK COWEN — PAREPA-ROSA — CHARLES KENSINGTON SALAMAN

WITH the opening of our first hectic London season my amiable friends, Lady J. and Sir K., took up their abode in London after their usual round of visits in various country houses during the winter. They at once sought us out, and Lady J. from that moment became our devoted guide, philosopher, and friend. She introduced and chaperoned us to some of the choicest gatherings of the Aristocracy, being determined as she said that we should be a "social success." "For you have the qualities, me dears," was her refrain. The J.'s were much sought after in London society, for her Ladyship, with her free, unaffected manners and her warm expansiveness, had the charm of making every one feel at ease where she was present. I never can think of the dear lady without a smile, and I could fill a volume with her amiable eccentricities. She was one of those favored beings who could do what she liked and say what she liked without ever giving offense, — Sir K., her dignified and formal husband, being the only one who was ever at all discomfited by her freedom of speech. Their house on Devonshire Street was only opened for about the three months that constituted the London season. During that period they entertained most charmingly. Sir K. was a gracious and delightful host, while her Ladyship fairly radiated warmth and geniality. At their evening parties there was mostly some music of an informal description and one always met, besides the aristocracy of the social world, some few of the aristocracy of the world of art. It was there I met Manuel Garcia for the first time, — that wise old man who was answerable for the equipment of more celebrated singers than any teacher before or since. Tall and straight, self-contained and reserved, he never expressed an opinion unless it was demanded of him.

Once, I remember, Dion Boucicault, the far-famed Irish actor, joined the party after his public performance, and was easily induced to sing one of his Irish songs. He sat at the piano and gave us a most spirited and startlingly eloquent rendering of "The Wearin' of the Green"; after which, while I happened to be chatting with him, The Lord Chief Justice, Sir Alexander Cockburn, came up, and laying his hand on Boucicault's shoulder exclaimed heartily, "You almost persuade me to be a Fenian!"

A rare and impressive personality was that of Sir Alexander. Small of stature and of somewhat slender proportions, one argued that the real man was all inside. What a keen wit and penetrating mind were his, and at the same time he was the most courtly gentleman I had ever met. On one occasion we were engaged to sing professionally at his house, — to a small and very distinguished company. The music provided consisted of some violin playing by Joachim and songs and duets by Rosamond and myself, Lindsay Sloper officiating as accompanist. I can never forget the enchanting, chivalrous air with which Sir Alexander, when the music was over, offered me his arm to take me into supper, — in precedence of the duchesses and countesses who graced his *salon!* It was such musical evenings as that one and those at the J.'s that did much toward reconciling my rebellious spirit to musical life in London, for there one did not have to pander to the vulgar taste of the majority!

The dear, irrepressible Lady J., among other eccentricities, had a fixed idea that I must establish myself among the nobility by a grand marriage. One day she appeared at our house, and hardly waiting for the usual salutation, exclaimed, "Clara, me dear, I've found the man! He is the younger son of the Duke of ——. He has ten thousand a year now and will have twenty thousand more when his father dies! You will meet at our party to-night." I let her run on, as I was in the habit of doing, for it was never necessary to either assent or object.

When the party was in progress, she appeared with a very tall, dark, lean and lank personage whom she introduced, with a significant glance, as M——. He had very agreeable manners and we chatted pleasantly together for about ten minutes, when, having filled the requirements of etiquette, I seated myself on an ottoman between two friendly and massive dowagers who, with somewhat exaggerated graciousness, were "drawing me out." Up came Lady J., her face all aglow, and standing in front of me exclaimed, without lowering her voice, "Remember, Clara, me dear, ten thousand now and twenty thousand more when his father dies, and he's charmed!" (This all in one breath.) I hardly knew where to look, I was so ashamed! My first thought was, "What will the dowagers think?" But I searched their faces in vain for illumination. They remained as impassive as stone pillars. Poor Lady J.! It was hard for her to understand why I could not fall in with her pet scheme!

Among the notable people who appeared in the social field, like the robins in springtime, was a certain Mrs. D. G. whose chief distinction was the brilliant *salon* held at her lordly mansion in Portland Place. Her husband was a member of Parliament, but her peculiar *métier* was to gather together in her *salon* a rare collection of social lions and people of public fame. She prided herself on always securing the latest celebrities before any one else got hold of them, and people had grown into the habit of depending on her for such treats. On one occasion when we were there with Lady J. as our chaperone, we were greeted with the novel sight of an Indian Marajah and his Court musicians, arrayed in all the gorgeousness of their Eastern costumes, sitting cross-legged on the floor and playing on a collection of the most uncanny-looking instruments I had ever beheld! The Marajah himself sat listening to the weird strains with rapt attention and obvious delight, while I, for my part, could make neither head nor tail to it all. I could only sense a confused jumble of sounds which suggested to my uninitiated ear neither harmony nor rhythm as we understand them. I was vastly amused as I watched the expression on the faces of the guests who encircled the group of musicians in their effort to be gracious and to seem appreciative, while their nerves were actually being racked. The painfully manufactured smile of approval and an occasional faintly hazarded "bravo" were really funny to the calm observer who knew! Meanwhile, the musicians themselves played on to the end with that sublime indifference to the listeners which characterizes the native of the Orient, — his attitude toward Occidentals being one of supreme contempt! In silence, and without the smallest change of expression, they folded their instruments and left.

After that ear-racking entertainment we all repaired to another room, where Julius Benedict was to play to us. I happened to be standing between Benedict and the Marajah, who, leaning on the piano, appeared to be listening so intently that when the piece came to an end I turned to the Prince and said, "I am wondering how you are impressed by our music, which differs so widely from that of your own country."

He answered with simplicity, "I have been trying to detect some musical sounds in it, but I have not discovered any! For me, that which you have heard from my musicians is the only music!"

This interested me greatly because it seemed so impossible that those instruments which had belched forth such discordant noises should have actually "discoursed sweet music" in the ear of the Indian Prince! Yet, when one reflects that blackened teeth and ringed noses — to us an abomination — are grateful to the eye of the Oriental, why should we marvel at the Oriental ear being attuned to sounds which to us are only ugly noises? The incident served to call my attention to the fact, since verified in travelling through India, that the Eastern mind works on diametrically opposite lines to our own, — that a wide gulf lies between their understanding and ours, which can never be spanned.

Apropos of Benedict — then not yet Sir Julius — I recall that on one occasion, when he was to play my accompaniments at a Monday Popular Concert (where in spite of the name, classical music was in order), after rehearsing with me a Mozart aria and a group of Schubert's songs, he begged me to retire for a while and leave him to practise by himself certain passages of which he wanted to make himself quite sure. The result was, of course, a most perfect "ensemble" which brought out all the beauty of the music, and I, the singer, instead of being handicapped by an uncertain accompaniment, felt that delightful security which adds so enormously alike to the joy of singing, the effect of the music, and the pleasure of the audience. This conscientiousness and reverential musical attitude of an acknowledged master-pianist of his day deeply impressed me in contrast with the flippant attitude of lesser lights of a later generation who but too frequently regard accompanying songs as beneath their dignity as *virtuosi*, and not worth the trouble of study to achieve a perfect musical interpretation of their part. I conceived a deeper respect for Benedict and a greater pity for those others who fail to recognize in perfect accompanying one of the fine arts!

The "Monday Pops," by the way, were one of the bright spots in London musical life, for in these, despite the characterization "Popular" — which really referred to the price of admission — the best of classical music was the order of the day.

We formed some close and lasting friendships in London, — friendships which survived long absence and many changes. One of these was with Frederick Cowen, now Sir Frederick, — who had followed us at the Leipzig Conservatory. He and his family, consisting of his parents and two charming sisters, were among our most intimate and dear friends. Rosamond and I were the first to take part in a private hearing of his cantata, "The Rose Maiden," an early work of much promise.

The Parepa-Rosas lived only a few doors from the Cowens — in St. John's Wood — and many a Sunday did we spend in pleasant intercourse with them also. I recall one Sunday in particular when, after dining with them, Carl was seized with the desire to have Rosamond sing the "Erbarme dich" (Pity me) from Bach's Passion Music to his violin obligato, as in the old Leipzig days. It brought back to us many sweet memories, so you may imagine what a jolt I got when Parepa exclaimed in her ringing voice, "Do you mean to say you find anything to like in that stuff? That you profess to, I say, is rank affectation!" This sally almost justified the Indian Prince!

Parepa had but little poetry or sentiment in her make-up. She was a preëminently objective creature, and very human. She liked "the people"; she loved to sing to them and receive their applause. I remember once hearing her say, when we were singing together in America, "I would far rather sing 'Five o'clock in the morning' to five thousand people in Boston Music Hall than all the masterpieces that have ever been written to one of your refined audiences!" It was doubtless her sympathy with the elemental taste of the common public which was the secret of her great popularity in America in those days when musical taste was still crude.

Another prominent figure in the musical world with whom we entered into close relation was Charles Kensington Salaman, a prolific composer of songs and director of the Musical Society Concerts which, however, at the time of which I am writing, no longer existed. Our first meeting was quite unpremeditated. I was singing at a concert and had just returned to the artist's room, after being encored in a florid Italian cavatina which a nice little French woman had told me was very "becoming" to my voice, when the room was suddenly invaded by a portly gentleman with bald head fringed with reddish hair, a broad, open countenance and aquiline nose, and a vast expanse of shirt front and white waistcoat. He made straight for me with arms outstretched and delivered himself of hearty expressions of pleasure at hearing "a style of singing which was only too rare," etc., etc.! He spoke of his esteem for my father and recalled that the Musical Association had once given a performance of "The Mountain Sylph" music. He then proceeded to introduce his two pretty daughters, who accompanied him. The acquaintance thus begun was followed up diligently by himself and his family, who opened their friendly arms wide to gather us in. The Salamans frequently had informal musical parties at their large and commodious house on Baker Street, where, besides many distinguished persons, we met a countless number of their near and distant relatives — all of whom adopted us promptly.

Salaman himself was a man of great sentiment and poetic feeling, — a thorough musician and of a delightfully enthusiastic temperament. The keynote of the family as a whole was warm affection and mutual admiration. The Salaman house was like a second home to us, so constantly were we there. We had been persuaded to give singing lessons to the daughters, Rosamond taking Florry, the younger, in hand, while I taught Alice, the elder, who was able to take my place as exponent of her father's songs to his great satisfaction by the time I left London for America in 1871.

There is, after all, a warmth in the nature of the Semitic race with which the average Anglo-Saxon is not overcharged! Moreover, if they are eager in the getting they are equally generous in the giving! I have nothing but pleasant memories of the period when we were thrown together with them, and I conceived a profound respect both for their strong family and racial feeling and for their practical application of their religious beliefs. Moreover, when art, literature, or science, rather than commerce, was their quest, what illuminated intellects one came across and what interesting personalities!

Such experiences should surely disarm all race prejudices!

CHAPTER III

PROFESSIONAL TOURS — TITO MATTEI AND CARAVOGLIA — CHARLES HALLE AND NORMAN NERUDA — MONSTER CONCERTS — ADELINA PATTI — AN ANECDOTE OF ROSSINI'S SARCASM — NEW NEIGHBORS — ROBERT FRANCILLON — ROSAMOND'S ENGAGEMENT — SCUDERI, A TALENTED SICILIAN — WICKED WAYS — A TRAGIC NOTE — AN ENGAGEMENT FOR AMERICA — THE PAREPA-ROSA COMPANY

LIFE jogged on from year to year with the usual round of concerts and musicales during the London season and professional tours in the Provinces with various groups of artists during autumn and winter. On one of these tours — with Tito Mattei, pianist, and Caravoglia, baritone, we gave a concert at the old "Assembly Rooms" in Cheltenham, where I had — at the age of six — outraged the proprieties by an unsolicited début as a singer! At Malvern, on the following evening, we were honored and entertained after the concert by Mrs. Haynes, — no other than the lady who had so deeply offended our dignity by laughing at the elaborate cadenza we little mites perpetrated at the end of an Italian duet. Thus does history avenge itself!

On another occasion I was engaged for a tour with Charles Halle and Norman Neruda. Halle, consummate musician and pianist as he was, always impressed me as somewhat cold-blooded, while Norman Neruda's violin playing was, on the contrary, full of fire and vim.

The strong contrast between the two temperaments was doubtless what attracted each to the other, for it was then already a foregone conclusion that Norman Neruda would be the future Lady Halle, — the prolonged life of a long-time hopelessly sick wife being then the only obstacle to their union.

We did not escape the prevailing nuisance of being besieged by young composers who were in the habit of following in the train of concert singers in the hope of having their songs introduced to the public. How we dreaded the advent of any one with the inevitable roll of music under his arm! For it meant that not only were we asked to try over their songs, mostly of the common commercial variety, but we had to frame some reasonable excuse for not placing them on our concert programmes so as not to be too hard on their feelings by calling a hat a hat! I may add that we never once compromised with our musical conscience by entering into a contract with composer and publisher to sing a song or duet for pay. We always maintained our independence in selecting the songs we preferred according to our best judgment.

One of the musical nightmares of London was the "Monster Concert" which generally began at half-past two P.M. and ended heaven knows when! When we drove away from the hall, after having delivered ourselves of our respective numbers, it was always with the conviction that the concert, like the brook, would "go on forever." These were generally "Benefit Concerts" of some musician of note, like Benedict, who by virtue of his prominence could command the gratuitous assistance of many of the best and most celebrated artists of the day, while other lesser lights deemed it an honor to be invited to take part in it. Meanwhile the

"COTTESWOLD," CHELTENHAM
Home of the Author's Parents from 1870

British public, dazzled at the prospect of hearing and beholding such a gala of celebrities in one afternoon, cheerfully paid their guinea for a seat, — one such square meal of music often sufficing for an entire season! The programmes for these concerts were made up without rhyme or reason, a heterogeneous medley of solos huddled together quite promiscuously. And how, indeed, could it be otherwise when the assisting artists more frequently than not sang out of their turn, either because they did not arrive in time, or because they had to leave early to fill some other engagement?

The artist's room at such concerts was a rather interesting place to any one fond of observing human nature. It was amusing to note the airs and graces of some of the artists and the eager expression of some half dozen or more pianists who were waiting and hoping to be called upon to play the accompaniments for some diva, — for one never knew till the last moment who there would be to accompany one. Whenever we espied Lindsey Sloper we always made a straight line for him to secure his services, for he was the prince of accompanists!

Adelina Patti always afforded us entertainment, for wherever she was she always seemed conscious of an audience and played to the gallery, so to speak. After singing "O luce di quest anima," loaded with skyrockets, she would rush panting down the steps from the platform and throwing herself into the arms of Strakosch, cry out in a plaintive voice, "Oh, it's so high — so high!" and immediately after she would return to the stage to sing an encore with still more high notes and skyrockets! I never remember her sister Carlotta singing where Adelina was; I think they must have purposely avoided colliding with each other!

Apropos of Patti and skyrockets, I recall a rather amusing anecdote. In Paris, before Adelina was known to fame, Strakosch took her to sing to Rossini. The piece she sang was "Una voce poco fa," from Rossini's "Barber of Seville," which Strakosch had so interlarded with embellishments that the original melody was utterly swamped. Rossini kept smilingly nodding approval and exclaiming "Brava!" "Bravissima!" after each new vocal stunt. At last, when Adelina had finished singing, he said, "Beautiful voice! Excellent method! And what a brilliant and effective song! Pray tell me the name of the composer."

London in those days was, after all, a wonderful emporium of talent. When I think of all the interesting artists with whom we were constantly brought into contact, I marvel that at the time I did not count myself more highly privileged. Artists such as Rubinstein, Joachim, Sivori, Wieniawski, Clara Schumann, Carreño, Titiens, Trebelli, Lucca, Lemons-Sherrington, Sainton-Dolby, Antoinette Sterling — many of whose names have passed into history — are pleasant memories to be treasured. I could cite dozens of others, but it would seem too much like a programme of a Monster Concert.

One of the most tantalizing features of a concert singer's life in London was that there was little or no opportunity to hear the really good music which in such generous measure was given there. There were the Old and New Philharmonic Concerts, the Oratories at Exeter Hall, the Crystal Palace Concerts under the direction of Doctor Manns and those of Leslie — the pioneer of unaccompanied choral music — where one might hear the works of Palestrina, Orlando Lasso, and all such ancient composers. But the hectic rush debarred one from attending these, and it was only when engaged to sing at some one of them that one went thither. However, the real musical world of London was not answerable for that. It could do no more than provide good things for those who hungered for them.

The following question has frequently been put to me: "Did you never lose your heart to any of those interesting men who were your intimates in Italy or elsewhere?" As I can see no reason for reserve on this point, I say frankly that up to the time of my marriage in America I had remained absolutely heart-whole. Such an unusual state in any one leading an emotional life must, I think, have been due to a powerful auto-suggestion that I must allow nothing to deflect me from my devotion to art. In answer to further questionings on the subject, I may add that I never for a moment deceived myself, nor did I raise false hopes in any one. I always made it clear that our intercourse must be strictly confined to good fellowship and nothing more. Therefore, when any of our friends unwarily overstepped the prescribed limits of Platonic affection it was their misfortune, not my fault! One cannot always guard against the folly of others!

My mother, from long habit of abstinence from "Society," could never be induced to attend any parties, not even those of our most intimate friends, and her hospitality was extended to only a few, — none of our affluent friends being included. After much coaxing, Rosamond and I succeeded in persuading her at last to give one real party in recognition of the many kindnesses showered on us, but that solitary party was about all! On the other hand the twins, Eugene and Reginald, with or without permission, brought their particular chums home to tea whenever they chose, and though not numerous, they were constant in attendance. There was, however, "old Guernsey," as we called him — a sort of literary "odd jobber" — a gray-bearded, kindly old man and a loyal devotee of my father, for whom my mother always had a place at our table and a warm corner at our fireside. In the course of time the family of Judge Francillon, of the Gloucester circuit, came to live opposite us, — the Judge himself having died prematurely of cholera while hastening to Switzerland to escape the epidemic. Their former acquaintance with my father in Gloucestershire brought us together quite naturally as neighbors in Gower Street. The eldest son, Robert, then about thirty, was a barrister, and had his father, the Judge, lived on, he would have been insured a brilliant career at the bar; but as it was, he represented that most hopeless class in England, — a briefless barrister with little to boast of save the dignity of his profession. Like many others in his case, he had turned to literature, for which he had a decided bent.

After sending the fruits of his brain, as he said, to no less than eighty magazines without result, he at last wrote a story called "Grace Owen's Engagement," which was promptly purchased by Blackwood. Moreover, Blackwood informed him that he would gladly agree to accept everything he might write in the future. This was indeed a lucky hit after much discouragement. Tall, near-blond, and of a somewhat reserved and formal disposition, Robert, as a matter of course, by the rule of contrasts, rotated naturally toward Rosamond, petite, brunette, and full of life. It was a case of "love at first sight." Nature had obviously marked them for mates. He, with his mother, a dignified gentlewoman, and his comely sister Edith, became our constant visitors.

Rosamond volunteered to teach Robert Italian, since he was an ardent student of languages (let lovers alone for finding an excuse to be together!), which led to his spending all our free evenings with us. Oh, those Italian lessons! It was well that they were chaperoned! Of course, it ended in our parents' consent to the engagement, for though up to that time they had never been willing to encourage any of Rosamond's suitors, they could find really no excuse here, as Robert came of a fine family and was a true gentleman in every sense of the word, — the only drawback being that his means were limited and that the income of an author of not yet established fame was apt to be an uncertain quantity. However, there was the promise of a successful literary career before him, which the future did not belie. So the engagement was ratified and the marriage, after a year of patient waiting, made practicable by Robert's obtaining a position on *The Globe.*

One day the boys brought home with them a young Sicilian named Scuderi. Where and how they had picked him up I do not remember. He was stranded in London, with no knowledge of our language and no friends save a few impecunious Italians. He lacked everything, — except a good opinion of himself! The poor chap was in dire need of advice and guidance, for he was elemental through and through. He had a nice open countenance, was very good-looking, lively, humorous and very talented in a crude way. He said he had never received any instruction in music, yet he played the violin admirably — after the light school of Sivori — and had also made some attempts at composition. Mamma's heart was touched by his forlorn condition, so she took a hand at feeding him while the rest of us undertook to help him professionally.

Scuderi had managed to write out a little serenade of which he had composed both words and music; the way in which it was written reminded me of my first attempt at composition at five years of age! It was full of mistakes and impossible things, but it had a pretty and graceful melody, out of which, I thought, something could be made. So I put it in shape for him and carried it to Hutchings and Romer, who took my word for it that it was worth publishing. More than that, I introduced it to the public by singing it in a few concerts. The song made a hit; "Dormi pure" became popular in amateur circles, and thus Scuderi came into notice. He fell into the ways of the profession by leaps and bounds, for hand in hand with the ignorance of a peasant went the quick instincts of an elemental creature. It was not long before he had established himself in London as a violin player, composer and — if you please — professor of singing! His confidence in himself certainly knew no bounds.

Now came the unpleasant sequel. The conceited wretch, having no conception of any such thing as pure altruism, took it for granted that my kindness to him and all the trouble I had taken on his behalf were due to admiration and preference for his personality, and when I made a business of showing him the absurdity of his presumption, he let himself go with unbridled rage and violence. I naturally declined to have anything more to do with him, and he was promptly forbidden the house.

In the course of a month or so the boys informed us that Scuderi had "come to his senses"; that he had met with a charming young girl, who was smitten with him and whose mother had consented to receive him as a suitor. Scuderi, they said, had pleaded with them so humbly to be once more admitted to our friendship that we yielded the point, there being no further danger of any misunderstanding. We made acquaintance with Scuderi's lady-love, — a pretty, dark-eyed, gentle creature, whose innocent happiness made quick appeal, and we became friendly with her family, who were nice people. Things went smoothly and pleasantly for a time until one day the girl's mother appeared at our house, agitated and in tears. She had come to me in her distress of mind to appeal for help and counsel. Scuderi, she said, had been neglecting her daughter and had at last confessed that his attentions to her were merely a stratagem to regain his foothold in our house. Her child, she said, was broken-hearted and pining away.

I was terribly shocked! The base, contemptible, heartless scoundrel! I had not words to express a tithe of my utter disgust for his conduct! But what comfort could I give beyond the mere assurance that Scuderi should never enter our doors again? That assurance could not heal a wounded heart or temper the pain of a bitter disillusion! Poor, confiding, little soul! If only she could have been roused to see what a fortunate escape she had from life with such an unprincipled creature!

The same afternoon I had a visit from Carl Rosa; his special mission was a proposal for me to go to America to sing with the Parepa-Rosa Opera Company. The other principals were to be Vanzini, soprano; Tom Karl and Castle, tenors; Campbell, baritone; Zelda Seguin, contralto; Ainsley Cook, bass; Mrs. Cook and Edward Seguin. The thought of once more treading the operatic stage allured me. To get out of the London rut, to be free to assert my own individuality, to shake off the dust of convention, — it was too good to be true! But I felt sure that Mamma would never consent. The ocean to be crossed; a strange country on the other side; alone; far from her protection! It seemed hopeless to expect her to let me go! I told Rosa so, but he urged and urged. "We need you with us," he said, "for there is no one on whom we could depend as we can on you. Singers are rarely musicians also, as you must know. Use every known argument to persuade your mother. Tell her you will be under our special protection; that we shall look after you as one of our own!"

It was as I thought; my mother would not hear of it. All my arguments were thrown away. Her ultimatum was, "Your father will be arriving to-night. He will settle the question for us." When Papa arrived I could hardly wait to tell him of Rosa's proposition. My pleadings must, I am sure, have been eloquent, for instead of treating the matter summarily, as Mamma had done, he thought it over, and then, oh, joy! he said, "Why not let her go? The change will do her good. She will be well taken care of, and I know she is to be trusted!" I always had an impression that my father's ready consent was given in reparation of the imprudent tilt with Mapleson which had barred my engagement in London opera. My mother tearfully gave in at once, when she saw how my father regarded the matter, so it was settled that I might go to America, and I felt happier than I had done for some time. My passage on an Inmann steamer was promptly engaged by Rosa, and in a few weeks' time it was Ho! for America!

CHAPTER IV

START FOR NEW YORK — A GRUESOME ROOMMATE — A STATEROOM DRAMA — NEW YORK — THE STRAKOSCH COMPANY — DÉBUT IN "THE BOHEMIAN GIRL" — ON TOUR — SANTLEY AND ADELAIDE PHILIPS JOIN US — WASHINGTON — "LA DAME BLANCHE" — A STUNT OF MEMORY — GRATITUDE

EAGER as I was to go to America, when it came actually to leaving home — for the first time in my life — the parting was hard! I knew "the lovers" would not miss me much, — they were too absorbed in themselves; but Mamma and the others! Was I selfish? I could not consider the question at that time. I only knew that I yearned for a new life, for a fresh vista!

It was my wish that none of the family should accompany me to Liverpool — to make the parting harder — but Domenico, who had not seen me for some time, insisted on coming up from Cheltenham to see me off.

As we were walking along the quay, waiting for the tug to take us to the ship lying in the stream, we noticed a very extraordinary-looking woman who seemed also to be waiting. She had large, wild, staring black eyes, a mass of rough black hair, and puffy cheeks of deep red bordering on purple. Yet she was dressed like a lady and was evidently not a common woman. As she passed us on the quay Domenico whispered, "I hope to heaven that awful-looking woman is not to be a fellow passenger!"

On being finally transferred from the tug to the liner the first thing we saw was that same woman, stretched full length on the deck in some sort of a fit! Officers and stewards stood around, gazing at her and sniggering at each other. One said, "Oh, let her alone: it's a case of drunk!"

The "all ashore" signal was given; Domenico and I parted with lumps in our throats, and soon after I went down to inspect my stateroom, when, oh, horror! whom should I see, taking possession of the opposite berth, but That Dreadful Woman! I did my best to repress my feelings while deploring my evil fortune at being doomed to put up with such a roommate for ten days or more! Meanwhile the lady showed a decided disposition to be friendly and seemed eager to tell me as much of her history as I cared to hear!

I learned that she was the wife of a lawyer in Gloucester of excellent family and standing. That one day, on seeking him in his study, she found him in a heap on the floor with his brains blown out! She had never recovered from the shock, and she confided to me that she never dared to remain a minute in the dark because she saw demons tempting her to fearful deeds! (This was encouraging!) "However," she added, "I have got the steward to promise that the stateroom lamp shall be left burning all night, so my mind is easy on that score!"

Her tragic story awakened in my heart a great pity for the poor woman whose fit, I concluded, must have been epileptic, and not what the rest had supposed; and when I found that her seat at table was next to mine I did not demur, for it seemed best that she should be near some one who, knowing her story, would be kind to her.

I remained on deck till rather late that night, talking with some fellow passengers, and when I retired to my stateroom she was sound asleep. I tumbled into my berth, when, to my dismay, the light was put out! I began at once to think, "Suppose the haunted woman should wake; what would happen? Will her demons tempt her to murder me?" I already felt the sensation of her fat fingers on my throat! I did not dare to go to sleep, tired as I was! The ship began to roll and creak, and I began to feel qualms of seasickness. Suddenly, out of the darkness came a deep, warning voice, intoned like that of the Soothsayer in the first act of "Julius Caesar."

"I'm in the dark! Oh, God! I'm in the dark! — I can't bear it! — I must — I must —"

Something prompted me to say in a loud, determined voice, "Be quiet! If you will stop that noise I will call for a light, but if you don't keep quiet I will go out of the room and leave you all alone with your demons!"

"Oh, no; oh, no; for God's sake, don't leave me — I will keep quiet!" she sobbed out. By now the uncanny noise had aroused a number of people. The steward and stewardess, the doctor, the purser, the Captain himself and others besides piled into our stateroom to see what was the matter. I explained the situation to the Captain and pleaded earnestly that the poor haunted thing be allowed to use some night-lights which she had told me she always carried in her bag. I added that the disturbance would not have occurred if the promised light had not been extinguished. "No matter if it be against the rules," I continued, "this woman has got to have light!"

My arguments prevailed; the poor creature with trembling hands fumbled in her bag for her box of night-lights, one of which was duly floated in the wash bowl every night during the rest of the voyage.

When the nocturnal procession had quitted us she overwhelmed me with her expressions of gratitude. I was "her guardian angel — her saviour," and I do not know what all! By now, I felt deathly seasick and had ceased to care what I was, where I was going, or what was to happen!

Next day there was a great commotion on board. Every one was talking about the "mad woman." It was pronounced unsafe for me to be in the room with her. I was the object of general sympathy. But what was to be done? There was no vacant berth on the ship to transfer me to. The only thing for me to do was to stick it out! The case was diagnosed by the doctor as one of delirium tremens! And I was obliged to accept his verdict when during the voyage I observed that at each meal she drank a whole bottle of champagne and, in addition, helped herself copiously to brandy from a carafe which she kept always at her side!

I found myself wondering which was cause and which was effect. Had the woman taken to drink because her husband blew his brains out, or did he blow his brains out because she had taken to drink? History is silent on the subject.

The journey was uneventful. We met with never an iceberg; we did not even see a whale! I spent all day, every day, on deck, rain or shine, in keen enjoyment of the exhilarating sea breezes. It was a small boat, carrying not more than fifty cabin passengers. Everybody was kind to me. We were a sort of happy family. The "mad woman" stuck to me like a limpet to a rock! No one else would have anything to do with the poor soul. They were afraid of her! In fact, I did not get rid of her till our company left New York on tour, for she put up at the same hotel and followed me like my shadow! As she had no object in coming to America, I shrewdly suspected that her people in Gloucester had persuaded her to cross the Atlantic to be rid of her!

How strange it seemed, after a twelve days' passage overseas, not to hear a foreign language spoken! Whereas, starting from the shores of Dover, one had only to cross the Channel to lose all trace of English tongue.

New York, as it appeared in 1872, made but little impression on me. I missed the beautiful and dignified structures of the Old Country. It all seemed so new, so commonplace, and so material. There was but little to satisfy the artistic eye. But yet there was a delightful freedom from convention in the very atmosphere which I loved. Oh, it was good to be among strangers and become aware of one's real self unalloyed and unrestrained! Not to feel bound down to anything! It was as a fresh deal in the cards of life, full of interest and expectation.

The Strakosch Opera Company was in New York at that same time, and I heard Christine Nilsson in company with Annie Louise Cary, Leon Duval, Capoul, Jamet, Brignoli and Ronconi. I used often to slip in to their rehearsals under the wing of the Ainsley Cookes when we were not on duty ourselves.

Our season opened brilliantly. Parepa and her company were received with acclamations, and the New York public seemed pleased with us all in our respective rôles.

My début was in "The Bohemian Girl," my other rôles being the Countess in the "Marriage of Figaro" and Elvira in "Don Giovanni." I must confess that, no matter how hearty the applause, I never experienced the same elation on the American stage as I did in Italy, because, I suppose, I felt the lack of real *artistic response* in an audience that only "knew what it liked" without knowing why. The joy of singing to a really discriminating audience was not to be mine in America at that time! Still, I was not unhappy, for I was beginning to understand and accept reasonably the limitations of the average public in its broadest aspect.

We visited most of the principal cities, starting with Philadelphia, and our travels were to me most interesting. I was on the friendliest terms with all my fellow artists, which added greatly to my serenity. Parepa, being of a genial disposition, and uncommonly well satisfied with the success of her company, was in extra good spirits and very companionable, — at times very amusing. But it seemed queer, somehow, to have entered into such new relations with our old Leipzig chum, Carl Rosa! For him to be "boss" — as they called him — instead of a pampered child of the house and devourer of our jam tarts! He, however, always continued, as of yore, to address me as "Miss Clara" (which he pronounced "Clayrer").

Every week I sent home a faithful account of each day's doings, accompanied by stereoscopic views of each place where we tarried, in order that the family might follow me in imagination. I recall with a smile that when I was at Pittsburgh, having taken a walk in the country one Sunday when the chimneys were at rest and having admired the scenery of the spot where the rivers meet at the feet of green mountains, I went next day into a shop to buy some views to send home, whereupon the salesman laughed in my face, saying "How do you suppose we could take views of

Pittsburgh with all that black smoke?" Humbled to the dust, I apologized! My family would have to visualize the Sabbath charms of Pittsburgh from my description of them!

One of our last halting places was Boston where, in addition to the "Don Giovanni" and "Marriage of Figaro," I sang in Cherubini's "Water Carrier." Rosa now conceived the idea of making a tag to the opera season with a grand trio of "stars" and with augmented prices, as it happened that Santley and Adelaide Philips were at that time open to engagements. Certain members of our company withdrew, others remained. Vanzini and I were of these last, although we realized that in a certain way we should be playing second fiddle. However, it was settled that we were to retain the parts originally allotted to us.

Santley's contract with Rosa insured him a certain number of performances per week, for each of which he was to receive a large sum, which fact led to an event which you will hardly believe when I tell it, which, in fact, I can hardly believe myself at the present time when a phenomenal memory and a rare faculty for quick study are for me so entirely things of the past!

As we were in the cars, just starting from Philadelphia to Washington, Carl Rosa came to me with distressed countenance and groaned out, "Vanzini is ill and obliged to remain in Philadelphia. I am at my wits' end! I don't know what to do! You know she is announced to sing in 'La Dame Blanche' with Santley in Washington to-morrow afternoon."

"Why not change the opera?" I suggested.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed. "The house is all sold out for 'La Dame Blanche'; it would be ruinous to change it and, besides, I have to pay Santley just the same, whether he sings or not! Oh, Miss Clayrer, *do* help me out! Do take Vanzini's place," he implored.

"But I do not know the opera at all! I have never even seen but one performance of it," I replied.

"But I am sure you could do it if you only would try to learn it for to-morrow!"

His distress was almost pathetic! The thing seemed hopelessly impossible; it was really asking too much. However, I said, "Well, I'll try! Let me have the score at once so that I may begin to study it here and now."

In about half an hour Rosa returned from the baggage car with failure written on his face! "The property man cannot get at it. All our trunks are on top of the one containing the music and cannot be moved till we reach Washington! What *shall* we do? What *can* we do?" He wrung his hands in his despair.

I tried to comfort him with, "Well, I will do my best to learn it when we get to Washington!"

It was about six in the evening when we reached the hotel. After eating a hasty supper I retired to my room, and Rosa soon brought me the score. I made a desk out of the two pillows, set the score up on my bed and went at it! My habit of mental study through visualization stood me in good stead in this emergency, for I could not even allow myself to be tempted to hum my part, as my room happened to be on the first floor and next the dining room! At about two in the morning I closed the book. My brain refused to work any longer! I said to myself, "Either I know it or I don't, but I've done my best. I can do no more. I *must* get some sleep!"

Next morning the anxious impresario appeared at my door early, his face labelled with "What hope can you give me?"

"Let us go to rehearsal," I said. "We shall soon find out if I can go through with it."

"But there *is* no rehearsal!" he almost sobbed out. "There is a ballet in preparation at the Opera House and the orchestra is on duty with it!" This was indeed startling news! "All you can have is a little rehearsal of the stage business with Santley!"

I had now reached a point where nothing seemed to matter any more. My nerves were strung up to such a pitch that I was ready to attempt anything! Santley was very kind and was ready to take any amount of pains with our stage-business rehearsal.

The performance came off duly at half-past two, and I went through with that opera without a hitch!

The public had not been told that I was "jumping into the breach," and for aught I know they may have taken me for Vanzini! Any one who is acquainted with Boieldieu's "La Dame Blanche" will appreciate the fact that the prima donna's part is neither a short one nor an easy one; that, on the contrary, it is extremely exacting, and as I think of it now, it is almost impossible to imagine how I ever did it!

It is interesting to recall that a few weeks later I no longer remembered a note of it, and had I been called upon to sing that opera somewhere I should have had to study it all over again!

On relating this incident I have frequently been asked in what way Rosa showed his gratitude. I will tell just what happened. On riding to the hotel with him and Parepa, he exclaimed suddenly, with stammering excitement, "Upon my word, Miss Clayrer, if you only had two more notes in your voice you would be one of the great artists of the world!" Which spontaneous declaration provoked from Parepa a sound — something between a snort and a sniff — from her corner of the carriage, — and that was all!

Yes! It is true that I had enabled Rosa to keep his promise to the Washington public and saved him from a heavy loss of money besides, and this at the risk of discounting my reputation by a scratch performance which I had no chance to render artistic by adequate preparation, but that was all! A "Thank you" and some compliments. But of course Rosa was an old friend, and one makes disinterested sacrifices for one's friends!

CHAPTER V

AN OFFER FROM MAX MARETZEK — A LOST OPPORTUNITY — RETURN TO LONDON — YEARNING FOR FREEDOM — SUCCESSFUL APPEAL — AMERICA AGAIN — A FREIGHT OF CELEBRITIES — RUBINSTEIN — A CHURCH POSITION — GOOD FRIENDS — MAX MARETZEK — ITALIAN OPERA — PAULINE LUCCA — KELLOGG — WACHTEL — BRIGNOLI — "DON GIOVANNI" IN BOSTON — OTTO DRESEL — DISTRUST OVERCOME — ENGAGED AT TRINITY CHURCH — BOSTON FOREVER

AT the end of our opera season Max Maretzek offered me anengagement in his Italian Opera Company for the following autumn and winter. How I longed to accept it! I had a great desire to return to America and, moreover, every one I knew urged my pursuing my career in the New World. But I could decide nothing without consulting my parents, and Maretzek wanted an answer from me there and then, so it had perforce to be a negative one! However, the desire to return grew in me the more I thought about it!

On reaching home, after the natural excitement of family affection had subsided, I began to experience the same "shut down," "bound in" and stale feeling which had so often oppressed me in London. Now that I had once tasted the joy of untrammelled being, I wanted it again, — I wanted it always!

But in my desire to return to America and in my re-solve to make every endeavor to accomplish my purpose I had something more than my own inclination in mind. Rosamond was to be married in the course of a few months; Eugene and Reginald had graduated from the University College School, and each had embarked on the career best suited to him, Eugene entering the field of commerce by attaching himself to a well accredited business firm, and Reginald entering the field of literature. The house on Gower Street, therefore, would be maintained solely on my account, whereas an attractive home awaited my mother in Cheltenham, and it seemed right that my parents should pass the rest of their lives together after their long separation on our account.

These considerations had their good effect in strengthening my arguments, which included the great opportunities which the new country offered me. But my point was not gained till I told my mother that a certain Mrs. Everett, from the Old Country, who had crossed the ocean with me, had proposed that in the event of my returning to New York I should board in her family instead of going to a regular boarding-house. The thought of my making my home in the family of a respectable lawyer, consisting of a wife and two daughters, was the thing which finally vanquished my mother's objections and caused her to consent to my going. So I wrote at once to make the proper business arrangements with the Everetts, and with the coming of autumn I sailed again for America to seek my fortune alone.

The voyage on the *Cuba* across the Atlantic was in very different company from that of my first trip! Among my fellow passengers were Pauline Lucca, Clara Louise Kellogg, Liebhardt, the agent Jarrett, Lindsey Sloper, the famous Polish violinist Wieniawski, and Rubinstein, and very good company they were.

The most interesting of them all to me was Rubinstein. I found in him a depth that I missed in many of the other artists. During the first few days he was horribly seasick and miserable, but toward the latter part of the journey he revived and was very genial. I attended his first concert in New York; the other performers were Liebhardt and Wieniawski, — whose name was the despair of the good New Yorkers, who finally compromised on "Wine-and-whiskey." When I went into the artists' room at the end of the concert I found Rubinstein mopping his brow, very red in the face, utterly exhausted, and furious with Jarrett for making such an exacting programme, which, he said, was only fit for a machine to play and not for a human being. The public was enthusiastic enough, but I doubt very much if they were able to appreciate one tithe of his greatness! But a great artist can *impress* the public without being *understood* by them. That was doubtless the case here.

A few days after arriving in New York I was offered an engagement to sing in Doctor Porter's church, in Brooklyn, to temporarily fill the position which Emma Thursby had held till she went to Europe, and which she would resume on her return. As the salary offered sufficed to cover amply all my living expenses, I did not hesitate to accept it, and certainly I never had cause to regret it, for I was the recipient of the greatest kindness and consideration at the hands of the congregation; and as for the minister, Doctor Porter, he was like a father to me! Every Sunday between services I joined his family circle at their hospitable board.

In New York I had good friends, too. Parepa had written to a few of her intimates there, asking them to look after me, as I would be alone in their big city, and they certainly honored her request most nobly! What dear memories I have of the "Leveys" who gathered me in, making me feel as a child of the house! Theirs was a family of boys, the youngest, Edgar, a mere lad at the time, being my particular chum. His real love and good taste for music attracted him to me, for the musical appreciation of the day was, in New York, to tell truth, at rather low ebb, songs by Millard representing the highest level of the average taste. There was always a room ready for me in the Leveys' home in Park Square, and I was made welcome whenever I felt disposed to spend the night or a few days with them.

Again, how many cosy little dinners and pleasant musical parties did I enjoy at the Cohens. In them I found congenial and sympathetic souls who cherished art and artists and who always gathered around them a coterie of more or less interesting people. I seemed somehow to get down to the bedrock of friendliness and hospitality while in New York, — alone and unattached.

There were yet other friends of mine and among them an English couple named Greey, who used to find their way to my abode in all winds and weather when they thought I might be a bit lonely. Not that I ever *was* lonely, but they thought I *might* be. Edward Greey had been a great traveller in the East. He had lived in China and Japan and had written some interesting books out of his varied experiences. Many and wonderful were the stories he used to tell of his adventures in China. It amused me greatly to hear about a certain little Chinese wife named A-tee, who had actually been given to him in recognition of services rendered, but whom he had nevertheless wooed and won as though she had been a free woman; how she became devoted to him, and how she — in fear of losing him — had prevailed on him to go through the marriage ceremony at the Joss House, which meant everything to her, though nothing to him. He used to dilate quite freely in his wife's presence on the happy days spent with A-tee and his little Chinese family, and on one occasion when she asked him why he was looking so pensive, he answered, quite naturally, "I was thinking of A-tee."

When Maretzek learned that I had come back to New York he reproached me for not having made up my mind to accept the engagement he offered me in the spring!

"I am sorry, too," I said, "for of course it is now too late; your company is made up!"

"Never mind," he replied, "I shall call upon you to sing with us sometimes; there will be opportunities to put you in!" And he kept his word, for I was engaged by him for a number of special performances, being called on to sing the Page's part in "Les Huguenots," in "Le Postillon de Lonjumeau," with the tenor Wachtel whose great "battle-horse" it was; also in "Der Freischütz" with Lucca, and in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," by Nicolai, — with Lucca and Kellogg. It comes to me as I write that during the scene where "the Wives" are sitting at table, Lucca and I got talking together — almost forgetting that we were not in private life, but on the stage — when laughingly she exclaimed, "My dear, do you know that in your excitement you have been speaking to me in three different languages?" I suppose I may have been a bit keyed up, for I had had to make a very quick study of the part. In fact, most of my engagements with the Maretzek company were emergency calls, the only exception being the Elvira in "Don Giovanni."

I saw more or less of Brignoli at that time behind the scenes, — and what a crude and childishly vain creature he was! Why should such as he be endowed with a voice to charm? Is it by some mysterious law of compensation? Is a phenomenal tenor voice a result of arrested intelligence? Or shall we accept Von Bülow's dictum that "a tenor is a disease"?

My musical activities were not confined to singing in opera and in church. I had also to fill engagements for concerts in different parts of the country and an occasional musical festival. One of these was in far-off Memphis, Tennessee, where I beheld for the first time vast fields of cotton, — a novel and interesting sight to me! Another festival was at St. John, New Brunswick, which ended tragically in the death of our Director of Orchestra, Koppitz. It happened before the last concert of the festival, at which the first violin, C. N. Allen, had to take the baton. The sadness of the event, augmented by the presence of Koppitz's poor wife, cast a great gloom over us all!

Was there ever another city with such a constant coming and going of artists from abroad? No need to travel in order to hear all the celebrities of the world! One had only to stay quietly in New York. They all came there sooner or later. The singers, violinists and pianists with whom I had been associated more or less in London all put in an appearance. Besides the ones already mentioned, there were Rudersdorff, Carreño, Sauret, Edith Wynne, Mario, Carlotta Patti, and a host of others.

At a grand reception at the Lotus Club I found such a galaxy of world-wide celebrities as one seldom finds massed together. On that occasion I had many interesting chats with Rubinstein and Wieniawski, — their joint comments on the motley crowd being most amusing. Indeed there was food for comment, for the queer admixture of guests suggested the interior of Noah's Ark! It was there that I saw Adelaide Nielson for the first time. What an attractive creature she was, either on or off the stage! Can I ever forget her as Viola? That voice so low and mellow, yet so clear and expressive! Even Ristori's voice could not discount it.

Soon after Maretzek's company had left New York on tour I received a telegram from him, begging me to come at once to Boston to sing the Elvira in "Don Giovanni." That telegram was the Finger of Fate; it shaped my future destiny!

Having responded to the telegram by singing in "Don Giovanni" at the Boston Theater, with Lucca as Zerlina, and Kellogg as Donna Anna, I was getting ready next day to return to New York quite happily when the card of Doctor S. W. Langmaid was brought to my room, and he soon followed in person. He reminded me that he had been introduced to me at St. John, where he had attended the Musical Festival. Having heard "Don Giovanni" the night before, he had felt impelled to call on me. I learned that he was an enthusiastic investigator of voices — not only as a throat specialist, but also because he himself was a tenor singer — as an avocation. In the course of conversation I inquired about the musical taste of Boston. He told me that it was very advanced, — that songs of Schubert, Schumann and Franz were greatly in vogue in amateur circles.

"How does it happen that Boston has so outstripped New York in musical appreciation?" I asked.

His reply was, "It is all due to the presence of one man, Otto Dresel, who has inspired our people with the desire for better things and taught them to perceive the beauty of the lyric in its ideal form."

At which I exclaimed, "Oh, if we only could have him in New York! How we need him there! I wish I knew him. I should indeed find in him a kindred spirit!"

He took me up at once. "I can easily arrange for you to meet him. My sleigh is at the door. I will slip over to Charles Street and get Dresel to appoint a meeting."

"But I am leaving Boston in an hour or so!" I objected.

"You can take a later train. Why not? Feeling as you do about music, you will not regret changing your plans for the sake of an hour with Dresel." The temptation was great to a soul hungering for musical sympathy, so I assented to his proposition.

In less than half an hour Doctor Langmaid returned to my hotel to take me over to Charles Street. On the way he gently broke the news to me that Dresel had a strong prejudice against opera singers. That he had found them for the most part unmusical, vain, and artificial, — caring only for effect, and ready to sacrifice the composer's ideas to obtain it. Although Doctor Langmaid had replied that he would find in me an exception, I felt in my bones that Dresel's consent to receive me had been a concession to Doctor Langmaid's eagerness rather than to any desire on his part to make my acquaintance. This impression was confirmed when Dresel entered the music room into which we had been conducted. No genial smile was there to greet me. Those large, earnest gray eyes looked coldly on me, and I detected a little cynical twist in the shapely mouth, only partially concealed by a short beard and moustache.

I at once felt that embarrassment which is present when one feels that one is approached with distrust.

Dresel made no attempt to take any initiative in the conversation, so I began by stammering out my desire to meet one who had done so much to elevate musical taste in Boston. I was conscious that he did not believe a word I said, — that it was to him the usual humbug of the genus prima donna, and my professions of faith gradually grew fainter and fainter, until the words almost died on my lips. Poor Doctor Langmaid looked troubled! I knew he was feeling that perhaps he had been rash in forcing an interview. At last — with an impatient gesture — Dresel said, "Come. Let me hear something," at the same time placing the "Elijah" on the piano desk and opening it at "Hear ye Israel."

I now suddenly *found* myself again and exclaimed boldly, "Oh, no: I do not want to show off my voice! I hoped you would let me make music with you and sing to your accompaniment some of the *lieder* for which I have so long felt starved." Somewhat mollified, he produced a volume of Schubert songs. We started in with "Wohin" and it was interesting — I might say almost startling — to note the complete change in his demeanor from that moment!

When he found that I could sing at sight everything he put before me, he produced volume after volume of Franz, — introducing me to all his favorite songs. I shall never forget that afternoon! The revelations of beauty in the Franz songs, which were almost entirely new to me, and those wonderful accompaniments of Dresel, charged with the poetic feeling of the composer! They were so suggestive, so inspiring, that it was impossible for any singer musically endowed not to seize at once on the true interpretation of both words and music!

We kept at it steadily for hours without heeding the passage of time. It was nothing short of a musical orgy! Suddenly it came to me that I had a train to catch. Then Dresel thus addressed Doctor Langmaid, who was now evidently gloating over the outcome of his venture: "Miss Doria must come to Boston to live; she must not remain in New York; we must keep her here with us! What can we do to bring it about."

Spake Doctor Langmaid: "We could offer her some inducements, I think, if Miss Doria would consider them. If, for instance, she would be willing to exchange her church position in Brooklyn for one here at Trinity. We have no permanent soprano at present, and I feel sure that the committee would be more than glad to secure Miss Doria's services."

The idea appealed to me tremendously. But as I could not allow the good, impulsive doctor to be sponsor for me, I insisted on first being heard by the committee and congregation at a Sunday service before making any promises. Accordingly, a time was appointed. I came, I sang, and was duly engaged, William Blake acting as mediator.

When I broke the news of my projected departure to the good people at the Brooklyn church, they offered me for the first time a permanent contract, with an addition of five hundred dollars to my salary if I would remain with them. But so set was my heart on Boston, with the lure of the musical atmosphere I craved, that I could not bring myself even to consider what was really a very generous offer!

My parting with the good, kind Doctor Porter and his family was not easily undertaken. They had been so good to me that it seemed almost heartless to turn my back on them! But there was no reproach in their attitude toward me; on the contrary, they were quite ready to acknowledge that having no specified contract with them it would have been both proper and natural for me to have accepted at any time any permanent position which might be offered, as it was understood at the outset that I was in the Brooklyn choir simply to stop a gap during Emma Thursby's absence abroad. So there was no rancor on their or any one's part, but only regret; and they entered sympathetically into my new aspirations.

CHAPTER VI

BOSTON HOSPITALITY — THE DRESELS — A PARTY AT WILLIAM HUNT'S — LOUIS AGASSIZ — DÉBUT AT THE HARVARD SYMPHONY CONCERT — DOCTOR EBEN TOURJÉE'S OFFER — CONCERT ENGAGEMENTS MADE EASY — THE EDWIN P. WHIPPLES — PLEASANT SUNDAY EVENINGS — BENJAMIN PIERCE — KATE GANNETT WELLS' PARTY — JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE — PHILLIPS BROOKS — TRINITY CHURCH CHOIR — BOSTON'S REPUTATION

WHILE settling up my affairs in New York prior to migrating, I received a charming letter from Mrs. Dresel, inviting me to make their house my home until I should, at my leisure, find just the right place of abode. A letter from Dresel himself accompanied hers, in which he said, "Mind, we will take no refusal! You must come to us!" But for this insistence I certainly should have hesitated to accept such wholesale hospitality from one to whom I was a total stranger. I soon learned, however, that Mrs. Dresel's happiness consisted chiefly in gratifying every least desire of Otto, the object of her adoration. I never had known a case of such perfect — such beautiful — devotion! His will was her will, not because it was imposed on her but because her love divined it!

They made me very happy while under their roof and urged me to prolong my stay far beyond all conventional limits! I loved the companionship of their two interesting children, Ellis and Louise, neither of whom, however, seemed destined to follow in the musical footsteps of their father.

Dresel and I made music together morning, noon and night. If I was hungry for the poetry of music, he was no less so for some one who could interpret at sight the masterpieces of which he could only mentally conceive the complete effect. Arias by Bach and Haendel formed an important part of our musical orgies, and these were for the most part beyond the grasp of the amateurs and young professional singers usually within Dresel's reach.

Up to the time I came to Boston, Dresel's principal interpreter of Franz songs was Sally Cary, — a sister of Mrs. Agassiz and a most devoted friend and worshipper of Dresel. She had an extremely sympathetic mezzo-contralto voice which lent itself readily to expressiveness, but a somewhat limited range made it necessary for her to choose her songs carefully.

Dresel had been in the habit of pressing into his service for songs of higher range, and for the more florid of the Haendel arias, Mrs. Moulton, who was the most popular of the local amateur singers, and who, in fact, being possessed of an agreeable and highly cultivated soprano voice, had at one time been urged by admiring friends to make a public début. Dresel used to send for her sometimes to sing certain duets by Haendel with me, for he liked to hear our voices together. She since has become the wife of de Hegeman, in diplomatic service abroad, and has led a most varied and interesting life in high places.

Meanwhile, as a guest of the Dresels, their friends all hastened to pay me some attention. Otto Dresel had been characterized as "the musical conscience of Boston." What he said, went. With his seal of approval the good Bostonians were ready to swallow me whole! John S. Dwight, of the Harvard Musical Association, wrote nice things about me in his *Journal*, and so did William Apthorp in the *Transcript*.

The first musical party which I attended with the Dresels was at the house of that great artist, William Hunt, and curiously enough the house inhabited by his family, Number 405 Beacon Street, was considered terribly out of the way in those days.

As a matter of course Dresel selected and grouped the songs I sang there, besides playing my accompaniments; indeed, never at any time did I have to trouble myself about my selections. I used simply to sing whatever he put before me, whether I knew it or not, and it happened not infrequently that I found myself reading at sight, as he never thought it necessary to trouble himself to learn whether I was familiar with the music or not!

It was at the Hunts' that evening that I met Louis Agassiz for the first time. As we sat together on a settee in the hall, he began, "I know you already far better than you could ever suspect!"

"How so?" I asked.

He continued: "If you will keep it secret, I will tell you. Otto Dresel showed me a letter he had just received from you; he had come to ask me what I thought of it. After reading it carefully my answer was, 'This is written straight from the heart! It is the genuine outpouring of a pure soul and a true artist!'"

Oh — ho, thinks I! Friend Dresel could not trust his own judgment about me, after all! He still harbored a lurking distrust of the "opera singer," and relying on Agassiz's fine intuitions, had referred my character to him! So it was really Agassiz that I had to thank for Dresel's surrender of his lurking prejudice!

Who could look on that benign countenance of Agassiz — who could come under the spell of that fatherly, human, sympathetic personality, — and not feel drawn to him for all time? Even from the first I never knew what it was to feel that something of diffidence so apt to be awakened by the presence of a great man. Agassiz was the living embodiment of the dictum, "All great souls are simple!"

My first public appearance was at the Harvard Symphony Concert in Music Hall, under the baton of Carl Zerrahn. My Aria with orchestra in part one was Selva Opaca from "William Tell," and my second number was a group of *lieder* glorified by Dresel's accompaniments.

Shortly after my début Doctor Eben Tourjée, Director of the New England Conservatory of Music, invited me to become a member of the Faculty, as a specialist in teaching German *lieder*. I could not make up my mind, however, to bind myself down to an institution. Tourjée was much annoyed at my refusal of his offer and warned me that I was throwing away the opportunity of a lifetime, that there never could recur such another chance of "being advertised all over the country." But what did I care for being advertised? It meant nothing to me. Advertising as a special industry — a commerce — an art — or whatever you may like to call it, was in those days, one might almost say, in its infancy. Concert agencies who required budding artists to pay over large sums of money for having their names, portraits and biographical sketches sent broadcast had not yet invaded the professional field, and an honestly begotten reputation was not so costly a thing as it is to-day! In my own case this is what befell.

After my début, a tall, red-headed, rather scrawny young man called on me to ask if I would consent to have him act as my agent, — terms, a certain percentage on all sums received through his bureau. The proposal seemed a fair one, and I accepted it. He procured me a number of engagements on the terms stated, — and that was all there was to it! If only the young artists of to-day could be made to understand that in reality there is no valid advertisement save success; no success without excellence; no excellence without good work, they would not so often be disappointed!

I had no difficulty in finding a suitable apartment conveniently near the Dresels, on whom I found myself depending constantly for advice; for problems would arise from time to time and delicate matters have to be settled, calling for tact, which Mrs. Dresel happily possessed in abundance. I was also blessed with friendly neighbors on Pinckney Street, where I had pitched my tent. There were the Edwin P. Whipples, who lived only two or three doors above me; the A. V. S. Anthonys a little below, and James T. Fields and his dear wife only two doors from the Dresels on Charles Street. All of these kind people gathered me in, opening their hearts and homes to me, so that there was no excuse for me ever to feel lonely.

Every Sunday evening the Whipples had an informal little gathering of old friends to which I was admitted. The house was rather stuffy, the company middle-aged, literary and scientific, but always good. Sometimes I used to sing them a song or two to enliven them a bit, patiently putting up with an old-fashioned square piano much the worse for neglect! At such times Mr. Whipple used invariably to stand before me with a smile that suggested a beatified frog (he was fascinatingly plain!) and say, "Where do you keep those nightingales?"

Once I inquired of him who that striking, venerable-looking, bearded gentleman was over there.

"That is Professor Benjamin Pierce of Harvard College," he replied impressively, "the great mathematician. You must know each other!" With that he made straight for the bearded sage.

The word "mathematician" had put me at once in a panic, for what could we have in common to talk about? A Professor of Mathematics would not be likely to care about either music or poetry, and as for me, horrible visions arose before me of stumbling over long division in my schooldays, and of still secretly counting on my fingers! But it was too late to head off that awful introduction, and before I knew it Professor and I were seated side by side aloof from the rest of the company. To my horror I perceived that he expected me to lead the conversation. Never did I feel so like running away!

Suddenly, out of my agony of mind, I remembered seeing an announcement of a series of lectures on "The Higher Mathematics" to be given by Professor Pierce of Cambridge, the titles of which had set me wondering what relation these subjects could bear to mathematics. So, by some happy inspiration, I began by telling him just what I had been wondering. He became interested at once in explaining the relations, and I, for the first time, was made aware of the sublime truth that at a certain apex Art and Science touch elbows; nay, more; that all knowledge, when it penetrates far enough into the centre of truth, is of one stuff, the Bable of differences only existing on the circumference of realities.

It was a great moment for me! The venerable Professor and I were speaking the same language; I could translate into terms of music everything he told me.

We must have hobnobbed for over an hour when, on parting, he said, "I feel greatly indebted to you, Miss Doria, for in the course of our talk I have come to realize that there are several important points which I have not touched on in my lectures and which should on no account be omitted!"

As I tell of the happy ending to my dreaded interview with Professor Pierce I am reminded of the good advice received from the Reverend James Freeman Clarke at a party at the house of Kate Gannett Wells. I remarked to him, "How embarrassing it is to be introduced — as I was just now — to an individual whose name I could not catch, and with no clue whatever to his interests in life, especially when, from the way in which he glares at you, it is evident that he is in the same dilemma regarding yourself. What can one say to start a conversation in such a case if one has a soul above the 'weather'?" Doctor Clarke's answer was, "I have found it a good plan to say what I had been *thinking* instead of *thinking* what I should *say*." This wise suggestion made a deep impression on me, and when I, either consciously or unconsciously, put it in practice on my introduction to Benjamin Pierce, it certainly worked well!

Phillips Brooks held his services in Huntington Hall at the time that I became a member of his church choir — Trinity Church having been recently destroyed in the great fire of 1872. (The second great fire which demolished the old Globe Theatre took place in May, 1873, soon after I came to live in Boston.) I must confess that I did not enjoy singing there on account of the uninteresting character of the music put before us by our good organist, J. C. D. Parker, — though not by any fault of his, but owing to the fact that Phillips Brooks objected so greatly to any suggestion of vocal display that a "Te Deum" with an effective solo for soprano or tenor seemed to him a false note in a sacred service. While quite in sympathy with Phillips Brooks' plea for severe simplicity in church music, and while I should at all times have approved Gregorian chants and Bach chorales, the arid, conventional strains of "Jackson in C" (Phillips Brooks' favorite "Te Deum") and others of that sort were not to my taste! Had it not been for the good fellowship existing in the choir — where my friend, Doctor Langmaid, was the tenor — I think my duties there would have palled heavily upon me.

It is with deep regret that I recall how little I was able at the time to appreciate the privilege of hearing Phillips Brooks preach every Sunday. It was so hard to follow him, owing to the abnormal rapidity of his speech, that I soon got out of the habit of paying attention and allowed my thoughts to wander! His inspired thoughts evidently came so thick and fast that they tumbled over each other in the utterance, and thus did I lose the precious teachings of that great soul!

One used frequently to hear Bostonians criticised for lack of spontaneity in expressing their feelings. A Boston audience was always cited as proverbially cold. Not without reason either, for their applause seemed to be given with some reservation, as if to say, "We are disposed to think well of you, but we are not quite sure about it!" Nevertheless, I had occasion to observe that when there was authority back of their own perceptions, they could let themselves go in wild enthusiasm with the best of them! All they needed was a pointer. In matters musical they followed implicitly the lead of Dresel, watching his face at the Harvard Symphony and other concerts when they had yet to hear his verdict.

On painting, Tom Appleton, the brilliant and witty, was the great authority. If he thought well enough of an artist to own one of his pictures, that artist's reputation was made, and his work purchased by amateur collectors without hesitation.

I remember one day, after one of his delightful little informal luncheons, in answer to my admiring comments on a picture by a certain artist, he said, "Yes, I saw at once that he had great talent, and asked him for one of his pictures." Subsequently I learned that several of his art treasures had been acquired in that way. Artists were only too glad to present him with a sample of their work, as Tom Appleton's ownership was a guarantee of their worth, and some such guarantee was a necessary stimulus to Boston's shy appreciation of genius.

While commenting on this particular precaution in judgment we must remember that Boston had its time-honored reputation to keep up and therefore could not afford to "dilate to the wrong emotion."

CHAPTER VII

THE CHARM OF OLD BOSTON — SIMPLICITY IN DRESS — IN ENTERTAINING — BOSTON EXCLUSIVENESS — EVENINGS WITH THE AGASSIZ FAMILY — A UNIQUE CONCERT — ANNUITY FOR ROBERT FRANZ — A SUMMER IN AMERICA — VISITS TO LONG BRANCH, NAHANT AND MANCHESTER — WITH THE DRESELS AT BEVERLY — A VAUDEVILLE STAR

THERE are, I think, only a few left who recall the charm of Old Boston! — of Boston as I remember it from 1873 to 1880, when simple living and high thinking were the order of the day; when people were valued for what they *were* and not for what they *possessed;* when Boston was still the hotbed of literature, art and science in America. In those days Boston had a social atmosphere quite its own and quite unlike that of any other place. True, it was not broad; on the contrary, it was restricted in its outlook; it might, in fact, have been called provincial but for its obvious aspiration to be familiar with and to appreciate the better thing. But then, of course, as a natural concomitant of these virtues, Boston was self-conscious, — as a sort of self-constituted advance guard of advanced thought!

The customs of Boston society were something entirely new to me, though as soon as I understood and fell into them I both approved and loved them. It was a bit difficult for me at first to conform to the fashions in dress, as my entire wardrobe rebelled against them. I remember that before arraying myself for my first party at William Hunt's home I asked Mrs. Dresel to select the one of my evening gowns she thought most appropriate to the occasion. She gazed at the assortment with ill-concealed dismay!

"My dear, you cannot wear any of these!" she exclaimed in holy horror. "It is not the custom here to wear dresses cut low in the neck as it is in England." As I owned nothing between the usual day and dinner dresses, what was I to do? We finally compromised on a guimpe improvised out of a lace scarf, so that though more gaily attired than the rest, I was, at least, impeccably modest!

Next day I got Mrs. Dresel to recommend to me a good tailor who fashioned a dress for me properly adapted to correct requirements, which I wore thenceforward at all private parties, being thus blissfully spared the ever perplexing question, "What shall I wear?" At first I thought that perhaps at some other houses I should find people more elaborately dressed, but no! I noticed at a party at the Martin Brimmers, where one met only the best of the representative Bostonians, the same severity of costume was strictly observed. Every dress was cut in a modest square or V in front with a garniture of some choice lace. The colors selected were always somewhat sombre, — black, brown, gray, or sea-green; the materials, however, of velvet, silk or satin, having the dignity of richness and stability. Giddy slippers and transparent hose were unknown quantities; neat, well fitting kid boots were the order of the day. Carriages were always ordered promptly at a quarter before eleven, as after eleven the fare was double. This simplicity made it possible for people with moderate incomes to entertain frequently, and those Brahmins of the Hub who did not always feel disposed to indulge in carriages could go on foot without destruction to their evening apparel.

I was struck with the peculiar custom of using the Christian name in lieu of the prefix Mr., Mrs., or Miss. It was Helen Bell, Minnie Pratt, Mary Lodge, Leslie Codman, and so forth.

How new everything was to me! For instance, the exclusiveness of certain coteries, the ignoring of any one not "in their set." I recall that once at a luncheon given by Leslie Codman I was telling of a very charming woman I had met in crossing the ocean. "Do you happen to know her?" I asked of my hostess. "She lives in Boston."

"Never heard of her," was the brisk reply; and from the other end of the table, "There isn't any such person!"

With a pleasant smile, which was meant to remove any sting from the speech, I remarked, "In other words, any one not 'in your set' is practically non-existent?"

But barring a few such little amiable weaknesses those intimates of mine were wholly delightful people!

Leslie Codman, who from the first took me to her heart, had one of those large generous natures to which was fitted a perfectly harmonious frame. Loyalty itself to those whom she liked, she summed up with uncompromising frankness the shortcomings of those she disliked with a finality which admitted of no discussion. Many were the delightful little dinners and luncheon parties enjoyed by me under her hospitable roof — for she had a faculty of attracting to her people who were interesting — presumably because of her keen appreciation of their qualities. And how she hated bores!

It was at her house that I first came into close contact with that brilliant, witty, and genial spirit, Mrs. Bell; with Mrs. Charles Homans, second to none in fine taste and manners; with the kindly and optimistic Mrs. Lodge, and her bright sister, Mrs. George Howe; with the Ellerton Pratts, the aesthetic and rarefied Mrs. Whitman, and one whose beautiful personality attracted me most of all, Mrs. Barthold Schlesinger. There was also the lovely Mrs. Sebastian Schlesinger, to whom I was greatly drawn. She had come from Switzerland to America with her father, Count Pourtales, who was associated with Louis Agassiz in his scientific researches. There was a freshness and simplicity about her in those early days of her married life which rendered her most attractive. Then, however, she was only at the threshold of a life yet to be unfolded and to be fraught with revelations wholly unsuspected.

In the matter of friendships I was as eclectic as these others were exclusive. Had I, like the members of the charming coterie above described, kept myself aloof from other types of people, I verily believe I should have died of moral asphyxia! Thus, Doctor David Parker and his impulsive, effervescent little wife — of French-Canadian extraction — were among the most intimate of my friends. Indeed, who could resist their whole-souled friendliness? For me their door was always on the latch, a room in readiness for my occupancy, and a seat for me at their table. Yet I was only one out of a bevy of young people who shared their hospitality. Such large-heartedness was theirs as one seldom meets with. They were good company, too! But all the same, they did not belong "in our set," and consequently were of course of no account!

It used to be a good deal of a puzzle to me why, in an avowedly democratic country, such hard and fast distinctions should be made. The only explanation I could attempt was that those who felt themselves intrinsically superior from any point of view were impelled to *assert* themselves as such, in absence of a caste system which automatically renders one social stratum distinct from another. I had to conclude that in Boston there existed a self-constituted aristocracy far more unyielding in spirit than that of other countries where there was no profession of democracy. How precious the memory of the quiet evenings spent in Cambridge at the house of Professor Agassiz, with just Dresel and the Agassiz family, — Dresel at the piano playing Franz songs for me to sing, and Agassiz with that dear, happy, benevolent face of his, sitting near the piano, beaming with delight at hearing the songs he loved most; for Dresel knew well which were his favorites.

On one occasion Dresel produced — as a surprise — a song which he himself had composed to Longfellow's poem in commemoration of Agassiz's fiftieth birthday. While I was singing it, Agassiz was so overcome that the tears streamed down his face. Who knows what tender memories those simple verses may have recalled!

One day Dresel came to tell me that it was proposed to raise a fund for the purchase of an annuity for Robert Franz, whose infirmities rendered him almost helpless. Of course, I entered into the spirit of the scheme with all my heart. In addition to collecting money, Dresel planned to give a concert of an extra choice description — all tickets to be sold at five dollars each — a rare extravagance for Boston! The *pièce de résistance* was to be the first part of Haendel's "Allegro e Pensieroso" with Franz's accompaniments. All the resident professional singers had eagerly volunteered to take part in the performance, — content to sing in the chorus rather than not be "in it." The tenor solos were to be sung by George Osgood, the bass arias by Sebastian Schlesinger, and the soprano solos by me. It was to take place at Mechanics Hall on Bedford Street, — very different in dimensions from our Mechanics Hall of to-day!

It was quite impossible to pin Dresel down to decide what the programme of the second part was to be. All I could get from him was, "You will sing some Franz songs." However, as I was accustomed to leave everything relating to programmes in his hands, I troubled myself no further about the matter.

When the evening arrived the little hall was packed with high-class Brahmins; and the sight of so many friendly and familiar faces, amongst which that of Agassiz stood out in relief, made it seem more like an intimate family gathering than a concert audience.

The effect of the cantata was magnetic, as was indeed everything into which Dresel put his ardent spirit.

After the first part of the concert, when we had finished making our bows, it seemed to me about time to find out what songs I was to sing in the second part. In answer to my query Dresel said, "We must, of course, ask Osgood and Schlesinger to sing one or two songs, and you will do the rest!"

He did ask them forthwith and they both promptly declined to sing on the plea of being unprepared.

"Never mind," said Dresel, addressing me. "You will sing during the rest of the concert!" Whereat he produced several volumes of Franz, and turning the piano in such a way that I could stand beside it and yet almost face the audience, he started in with some of his heavenly preludes, and I soon forgot that I was not alone with him in his own music room. I think I must have sung from twenty to thirty songs that night, a number of which I had never seen before but was reading at sight!

It certainly was a unique concert — that — if nothing else. But, for my part, I had a glorious time, and apparently the audience enjoyed the evening a great deal more than if the concert had been one of the regulation variety. In any case, they must certainly have felt that they had obtained their money's worth of music — considered as quantity. On this occasion I met with a number of the musicians of the day whom I had not met before. All were there!

My next engagement was to sing Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" with Theodore Thomas at Chicago. Myron Whitney was the bass and, I think, William Winch was the tenor. There followed other concerts with the Thomas Orchestra in Illinois. I was struck with Thomas's fine reserve in conducting. He was so quietly masterful and magnetic instead of boisterously flapping about in the orchestra like some others. I found him also very friendly and genial.

There was to be no England for me that summer, as Trinity Church accorded the choir only one month's holiday, — the bulk of which I spent at Long Branch with my New York friends, the Leveys. The remainder of the summer was spent in little visits — between Sundays — to different friends at the seashore. Thus I visited the Codmans at Nahant, the Fields at Manchester — at their interesting house on Thunderbolt Hill — and the Dresels at Beverly.

Apropos of my visit to the Dresels, I remember that on my arrival Mrs. Dresel was entertaining an old school friend of hers, a Mrs. Hopper, who had come unexpectedly to spend the afternoon, accompanied by her son, — a mere boy in his early teens. Dresel, who had unearthed a pile of Bach and Haendel arias in anticipation of the musical orgy we were to have had all to ourselves, was greatly fretted at the intrusion of outsiders who, he felt sure, would only be bored by our music. Poor Mrs. Dresel, knowing how sensitive her Otto was to the presence of any unsympathetic listener, hardly knew what to do, especially as Mrs. Hopper had expressed her pleasure at "happening in for a musical treat!"

After balking at the piano, looking very discouraged and unhappy, Dresel jumped up, and taking his wife aside, said, "Anna, you must get rid of 'that boy' somehow. I cannot make music with him sitting there!" So the boy was dragged away to the stable to see an uninteresting horse, — much against his will. Meanwhile we started in with our music. In a minute or two, however, I noticed that the boy slunk furtively back, settling himself in a remote corner of the room — out of Dresel's sight — intuitively feeling that he was "persona non grata." He remained quiet as a mouse during the whole afternoon, and I was fully persuaded that the lad was "taking it all in," Dresel, meanwhile, remaining happily unconscious of his presence.

It was a source of amusement to me, many years later, to identify the "De Wolfe Hopper" of vaudeville fame with "that boy" so ignobly banished from the music room to the stable as unworthy to breathe the air with devotees of the old masters.

Who knows but what that afternoon settled that boy's future destiny? Who knows but what that drastic dose of Bach and Haendel — acting as a warning — drove him to vaudeville?

Any one interested in the study of Cause and Effect might do well to look the matter up.

CHAPTER VIII

A CALL FROM PROFESSOR AGASSIZ — AN UNEXPECTED INVITATION — THE AGASSIZ COTTAGE AT NAHANT — AGASSIZS' MUSIC HUNGER — A MUSICAL SÉANCE AT THE CARYS' — THE LAST OF AGASSIZ — A GREAT GRIEF — SIMILARITY IN CONTRASTS — THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA COMMEMORATES AGASSIZ'S ANNIVERSARY — DRESEL'S SOLICITUDE — A HUMOROUS TRAGEDY

THE most memorable of my summer visits to the seashore between Sundays was one made in the last days of June, to the quaint Agassiz cottage at Nahant. In itself a great joy, that visit was the prelude to the greatest grief of my life up to that time, — the severing by death of one of the strongest, the most precious bonds of friendship and sympathy that I had ever known!

Louis Agassiz appeared in person one day at my studio to bring me the invitation to visit them. He said: "This summer I can only afford one single week's vacation at Nahant, and during that vacation I want your companionship! It will be for me only a short breathing space, as on the Fourth of July I must be at Penikese to open the Summer School of Natural History, and from that time forward there will be for me nothing but concentrated work. I shall need all the refreshment I can get during that one week at Nahant."

Can you imagine my feelings? I had never felt so overwhelmed — so touched — in my life! It must have been that he wanted to put aside all thought of Science and not to be reminded of the strenuous work before him that he craved my ignorant company, — as one might read a story-book for distraction before some ordeal that was weighing heavily on the mind. But I was only too willing to be the "story-book" or anything else that might help to relieve the strain from that overtaxed brain, — such reverence did I feel for that beautiful soul!

What a wonderful week that was — at Nahant — by the side of Agassiz! As he lay in a hammock on the verandah overlooking the water, he would turn to me every now and then, perhaps after a long, dreamy silence, and say whatever he had been thinking. Once, for instance, he said: "I wonder what is the cause of those silvery-white tracks on the surface of the water? There is no wind stirring and not a cloud in the sky to cause variations of color. What do you make out of it?"

Here was a fair sample of his attitude toward others. With all his accumulated knowledge and wisdom, he was never in the smallest degree didactic. Never placing himself above the level of his companion, he always seemed rather to be saying, "Let us work it out together!" Anything more endearing and more restful in human intercourse can hardly be imagined than companionship with him!

One afternoon, when he had seemed unusually thoughtful and, I thought, somewhat troubled, he burst out impulsively with, "I *must* have some music! I am feeling the need of it. What can we do about it?"

As there was no piano in the Agassiz cottage, I suggested that we go over to the Carys' in the evening, Emma Cary being a pianist, very musical, and accustomed to play the accompaniments of Franz songs for her sister Sally, — one of the most ardent devotees of Dresel and all his works!

"The very thing!" exclaimed Agassiz; "why did I not think of that before?" So to the Carys' we went, and Emma, nothing loath, took her place at the piano, I standing at her right with Agassiz facing us, buried in an easy chair. We made music for nearly two hours, selecting carefully all Agassiz's favorite songs. He made, however, no response whatever, but seemed lost in a far-off world. When we stopped our music, he started up suddenly with, "We must go home!"

We took the short cut to the cottage over the downs in silence; then after a little while he drew my arm gently through his and said in a low voice, "You can never know what you have done for me to-night."

"How so?" I asked. "I thought you were not listening with your usual interest and I felt disappointed!"

"I don't know what the music was!" he exclaimed impulsively. "I only know that from the moment you began to sing a great weight seemed to be lifted from my cloudy brain. Ideas that I had been striving to formulate suddenly stood out clearly in my mind. Now my way at Penikese seems straight for the first time in weeks. I can never, never thank you enough!"

Agassiz left next day to make ready for the opening of the school at Penikese, and from that time forward I never saw him again.

In the following December, when the news of his death was brought to me, I was so overcome with grief that I had to let at least two weeks pass before daring to trust myself to go to Cambridge to see Mrs. Agassiz.

We had then a heart-to-heart talk and I was beginning to feel confidence in my self-control, when suddenly my eye wandered to a glass aquarium which filled a bay window. At sight of it, for some unknown reason, I broke down completely! Then followed the anomaly of a bereaved wife, from whose life every ray of sunshine had departed, as she expressed it, playing the rôle of comforter to me, — a simple friend! I can never forget how ashamed I felt!

The peculiarly subtle effect that music may have on the mind — in stimulating and clarifying thought — was rather humorously exemplified under contrasted conditions on another occasion.

During one of my visits to the seashore, allured by the presence of a beautiful Steinway piano, I used to extemporize alone in the twilight. On observing that one of the sons of the house — a very matter-of-fact youth and not in the least musical — was in the habit of coming in from the verandah as soon as he heard me at the piano and of remaining quietly ensconced in a corner, I asked him one day why he did it.

"I'm sure I don't know," he answered. "It isn't for the music itself, because I don't care for music. But somehow, when you are playing like that to yourself, all sorts of good business schemes come into my head! I've thought of a splendid turn I can make right now — this very afternoon!"

Here was a case of music making a strange alliance of the sublime and the commonplace. A common bond of sympathy between a great-souled scientist, whose quest was the stores of the ocean depths wherewith to construct a living monument to divine creation, and a commonplace youth whose aspirations soared no higher than dollars and cents!

In the month of May, 1874, about six months after Agassiz's decease, it was proposed to have an informal musical commemoration of his birth-anniversary at one of the Symphony Concerts. It came about quite naturally that Dresel's song, composed to Longfellow's words and written for Agassiz's fiftieth birthday, should be chosen as the most appropriate vocal piece, and also that I, being identified with the song and by virtue of my devotion to Agassiz, should be invited to sing it. The song, however, was written only with pianoforte accompaniment, so Dresel, rising to the occasion, volunteered to orchestrate it. He set about it forthwith with his usual ardor and passionate desire to make it as perfect as possible. Every day or two, while the work was in process, he appeared at my studio and rushing to the piano, asked anxiously, "Do you think your voice can carry the trumpets in this passage?" or some other question relating to balance of sound or some delicate nuance. At last, the score completed and the orchestral parts copied and corrected, we rehearsed it with the orchestra. It sounded well, but the meticulous Dresel took the score home with him after the rehearsal to add an infinity of expression marks for the conductor — Carl Zerrahn's — especial benefit.

On the day of the concert, when it was about time to betake myself to Music Hall, Dresel drove up in a large landau to escort me. For some occult reason he had hired the largest vehicle obtainable, with the result that when we reached the little courtyard on Winter Street we were told that we could not enter there, our carriage being a full sweep landau which could not be turned in such a narrow space. Our driver was told to go to the Tremont Street entrance. Both Dresel and I were unfamiliar with its intricacies, and after walking through the long passage we mounted some steps which we supposed led to the Green Room. Dresel, however, much flustered at the delay, failed to recognize the door of the Green Room in his agitation, but continued up one flight more and yet another and another, paying no attention to my meek suggestion that the room must be on the first floor of the building! It was only when we reached the skylight that he could be persuaded to retrace his steps! Finally we landed breathless and panting in the proper place after our fatiguing mount up three flights of steep stairs, — his conscience very sore at having got me into such a scrape!

I had noticed that he had been hugging a little black leather hand-bag all the way. He proceeded to open it and drew forth first a bottle of champagne, then two glasses and a piece of ice wrapped in flannel.

"What is all that for?" I asked.

"I have noticed that you sing particularly well after a glass of champagne," he replied. "This is good. It is Sebastian Schlesinger's!"

I could hardly keep from laughing, though I was really touched at his thoughtfulness of me in the midst of his own anxieties!

By the time he had administered the sparkling fluid it was time to mount the platform. After making my bow, Zerrahn asked Dresel, "Where is the score of the song?"

"My God! I've left it at home!" was his despairing cry.

He had thought of champagne, glasses, and even flannel to wrap the ice in, but that precious score, on which he had spent so much time and care to insure Zerrahn's perfect understanding of his intentions, was reposing on his piano at home. It was really tragic!

Meanwhile the public must not be kept waiting, and Zerrahn, always good-natured and easy-going, said, "Never mind! I will look over Miss Doria's shoulder at her copy!" I held it so that he could see, and with Dresel supplementing at the piano, the performance went smoothly enough after all! The audience apparently suspected nothing of the *contretemps*.

Dear man! Once over and well over, he fretted no more over the mishap! His lapse of memory was apparently forgotten, and he never alluded to it afterward.

CHAPTER IX

A PROJECTED TOUR — A SUMMER IN ENGLAND — FAMILY REUNION IN CHELTENHAM — STEAMER ACQUAINTANCES — HENRY JAMES — OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, JUNIOR — A CYCLONE WITH VARIATIONS — BACK TO BOSTON — ON TOUR WITH CAMILLA URSO — MIDDLE WEST AND BEYOND — AMUSING EXPERIENCES — UNSOPHISTICATED AUDIENCES — DREADFUL HOTELS — UNCIVIL PROPRIETORS — DISCOMFORTS — SAVING GRACE

SHORTLY after, I was offered an engagement to go on tour for eight months with the famous violinist, Camilla Urso, in the following autumn. I accepted it, not wholly because of the steady income it insured me, but because I hailed the opportunity for travel in sections of the country which I should have but little chance of ever visiting except in some such way, the promise of new experiences being always alluring to me.

The Dresels were preparing for a long stay in Germany, by which the artistic lure of Boston was lessened. I was also beginning to fret at being tied down to a church choir. This was a good excuse to break away. There happened to be available an admirable substitute in Miss Parker, who was inherently far better suited to the position than I; so I severed my connection with Trinity Church Choir and was thus free to spend the ensuing summer in England with my parents.

Rosamond, now Mrs. Robert E. Francillon, was settled in London. She had abandoned her career as a public singer and had become a part of the literary world in which her husband had taken his stand successfully.

My parents were living together with my two brothers, Domenico and Julius, in a pretty and comfortable house on Leckhampton Hill, where we were joined later by Rosamond and Robert Francillon, and also for a brief period by the twins, Eugene and Reginald. I was now treated by the family as an honored guest, my emancipation and wider world experience evidently entitling me in their estimation to special deference! It was altogether a very tender and a very happy family gathering.

Many were the delightful acquaintances I made in crossing the ocean, — the fact that I was travelling alone laying me open on all sides to friendly advances. Among other interesting people, I became acquainted with Henry James and with Oliver Wendell Holmes, Junior. Henry James, who was but a poor sailor, was always to be found on deck, glued to his steamer chair and swathed in rugs. No day passed without a good long chat together, for it entertained him to hear of some of my queer experiences abroad. He never impressed me as a brilliant conversationalist, but rather as one seeking to draw out from others what they had seen, done, and thought. But he was a rare good listener, interested, sympathetic, and stimulating. Mr. Holmes, on the other hand, sparkling, suggestive, and possessed of keen perceptions alike of humor and everything else, was by far the better company of the two. It was a delight to follow the subtle workings of his imaginative brain! I shall always remember that trip on the

Siberia back to Boston as an intellectual feast, — and something more, — for in its course we struck the tail of a cyclone! It was a new sensation to make a step forward and find oneself facing in the opposite direction — with variations. It was a very uncomfortable experience, and the wonderful sight of giant waves and blue water pouring into the smokestack were not as interesting as they might have been at some other time. I was glad to crawl down into the saloon, where I found as many of the passengers as the sofas could accommodate sprawling at full length; and among them were Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who had justly won their spurs as first-class sailors!

But there is always a funny side to even the direst of misery. There appeared at the saloon door a fat, heavy-looking German, who stood eyeing the recumbents with a superior, shiver-my-timbers expression; when suddenly the boat gave a lurch, and he was pitched forward on to the floor of the saloon, where he rolled like a huge log from under one table to another and back again. When finally, with the aid of two stewards, he staggered into a perpendicular position, he surveyed the passengers with an inane smile, and sinking into a chair, exclaimed, "I believe I vill sit down!"

On arriving in Boston, after my summer vacation in England, I made speedy preparations for starting on my tour with Camilla Urso.

Our travels were to embrace many states, — New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Missouri, Canada and lastly, New England.

My fellow artists on the tour were Fessenden, tenor; Rudolphson, baritone; and Sauret (brother of the violinist), pianist and accompanist. Our travelling manager was Mr. Luer, a Frenchman and husband of Camilla Urso.

The programme which was to do duty for all our concerts was well chosen from an artistic standpoint; but alas! as soon as our path led us away from the principal musical centers we found it quite impossible to adhere to it. It would have been sheer cruelty to audiences who could be appealed to by nothing but the most elemental stuff! So, without changing our printed programme, we simply substituted other things more nearly on the level of their comprehension; and the joke was that they never found it out! For instance, I was billed to sing for my first number the air Nobil Signor from the "Huguenots," but instead I sang an English song about "a little bird" in which I represented the feathered songster in a long-drawn-out high note sustained "pianissimo." The press notices, however, invariably commented on my singing of the air from "The Huguenots"!

Fessenden and Rudolphson sang an effective little duet written to Longfellow's words, "I know a maiden fair to see." They soon found, however, that even that very mild musical effort was beyond the comprehension of our audiences, so by some human — certainly not artistic — instinct, they turned it into a piece of buffoonery, Rudolphson pouting out his lips till he resembled a Baskir man, and roaring out in a stentorian voice, "be w-a-a-a-re!" while Fessenden, by way of contrast, uttered in a small falsetto — "Take care! take care!" This method of caricaturing the words took immensely, the public demanding the piece again and again, and fairly "chortling" with joy! Their performance was usually spoken of in the local press as "their artistic rendering of *Longfellow's* immortal duet." I remember that the critic of one local paper somewhere out West, wishing to show his superior knowledge, wrote, "Mr. Fessenden *sang a 'Sonata.'*"

In the early part of our travels I was appalled at the total absence of any musical perception of even the crudest kind with which we were evidently doomed to be confronted during eight long months! But seeing that there was no escape, and that our job was to satisfy our unsophisticated audiences somehow, I began to apply my best philosophy to the situation, — incidentally trying to get some fun at least out of it. I was aided partly by a keen sense of humour and partly by an inveterate habit of always wanting to find out the "reason why" of things. It became gradually a matter of interest to me to try to discover how their minds worked, — if they worked at all. Or was their pleasure purely physical reaction? So I took to observing closely the attitude of our audiences; an easy matter, as we had often to sit on the platform during the entire concert, — there being no retiring room for the artists, but only a screen placed at one end of the stage.

At one place they insisted on our sitting on the stage in full view of the audience throughout the concert, like the Christy Minstrels, on the plea that "our folks are accustomed to that way — they like to be taking it all in." The "Master of the Ceremonies" rose to announce each piece as it came on the programme, wrestling with the foreign names, thus: "Miss *Doriyer* will now favor us with the air from the 'Huggnots,'" and so forth.

As the public had, of course, to get their money's worth of the goods, every piece on the programme was encored. But they must have liked what we were giving them or they would not have asked for more.

Now, what was it that they found in it to like? That was the question.

In one place, somewhere in Ohio, I think, when Urso played as an encore to her second number an arrangement of "The Last Rose of Summer," in which there occurred a much prolonged trill, my attention was attracted to a young couple in the audience by their open-mouthed expression of wonderment. When the trill began the girl nudged the youth, and a broad grin was exchanged. As the trill persisted the grin gave place to a peal of laughter, which was presently echoed in different parts of the hall until the entire audience gave themselves up to unbridled mirth. That trill was so funny! Of course the fiddler was doing it for a joke, just to amuse them!

One thing that remained a constant enigma to me was that when Urso played her first number, which was nothing less than Mendelssohn's Concerto (the last two movements ending with the brilliant Rondo), all audiences, without exception, responded to it, applauding to the echo. What could it mean to them? How did it affect them? That was what puzzled me, for, as music, they certainly could not appreciate it! One night, however, the mystery was solved. On making our way with the crowd out of the concert hall — there being no separate exit for the artists — I overheard the comments of two substantial-looking men in front of us.

One began: "Pretty fine show that! My, didn't that Doriyer woman hold on to that sky-note of hers? First I looked up at the chandilly to see if 'twas the gas 'scapin', but no, by gosh! 'twas her all the time, ha, ha, ha!"

Then the other retorted, "Well, how about that She-fiddler? She be the one for my money! Golly! Didn't she go it hellitolarrup over that fiddle!"

Now I had it! The mystery was solved. It was not music, as such, that they needed; it was not beauty of any sort that appealed to them; nor even sweet sounds soothing to the spirit, but only the things which were astonishing in some way, — such as the stunt of rapidly moving fingers over the fiddle strings, or an abnormally long, soft, high note, because it sounded like something else with which they were familiar, or because it would seem impossible for any one to hold their breath so long! All the rest was to them "leather and prunella" except the antics of those two "funny men" in their duet.

Such a record of utter crudeness in taste and lack of sensitiveness to music may appear in the light of today to be grossly exaggerated. Be it remembered, however, that this is a chronicle of conditions in 1875, in places remote from art centers, and that America, especially in the West, has been of rapid growth.

Many were the discomforts, the annoyances and the surprises experienced during our travels in the Middle West and beyond. Fortunately there was the saving grace of an amusing side to many of our adventures. There were delays in trains and missed connections which brought us to our destination so late as to leave us barely time to get our trunks open, fling ourselves into evening dress and drive — supperless — to the concert hall.

Once we were delayed in arriving at Potsville, a mining district in Pennsylvania, until eight o'clock, and in spite of hurrying all we could and dispensing with food, the audience had to be kept waiting in the hall for over half an hour. We had had nothing to eat since breakfast but two stale doughnuts each, and we all felt pretty low in our minds! But the sight of our unique audience and their enthusiastic reception of us revived our spirits. There was a huge crowd assembled. The mothers had brought their babies with them and the men their dogs! Both varieties, human and canine, joined lustily in the applause with their respective yellings and barkings! It was indeed quite a circus for us! The cleverest of clowns could not have afforded us so much amusement!

We had not infrequently to put up over night at hotels where the proprietor considered it unnecessary to have the bed linen changed for fresh occupants! Urso, who was versed in their ways, always made straight for the beds on our arrival, and if, on opening them, she found what she suspected, an indignant protest was made to the proprietor, who coolly intimated that we were "too darned particular" and would have to get over our fads if we were travelling in that part of God's country! In such cases we stripped the beds to the mattress, and rolling ourselves up in our shawls and rugs, spent the night as comfortably as we could without sheets.

Mr. Luer never failed to telegraph ahead both for rooms for our party and for a closed carriage to take us to the hall: therefore what was our chagrin, on reaching a little town in Wisconsin just in time to dress and start for the concert hall, to find at the door of the hotel only a one-seated open buggy! A terrific blizzard was careering at full force as we stood shivering and looking vainly for our carriage. But we were soon informed that the miserable little buggy was all they had for us! And there we were in evening dress without any proper protection from the raging elements! To make matters worse, we were told that one of us ladies would have to take the reins, as there was no place for a driver, two being quite a crowd in that trap. "But we neither of us know how to drive," we protested pitifully, "and moreover, we don't know the way to the hall!"

Some one said, "You've only got to go about a mile up the road, turn to the right, then to the left, then round the corner and there'll be the hall a-starin' you in the face." Our utter dismay at the hopeless prospect before us must have touched somebody's heart, for suddenly there emerged from the depths of a rocking-chair a lumpish, good-natured kind of man, who mumbled sheepishly, "Git in; I'll squat somehow and drive y' up." We obeyed. He squatted at our feet and took hold of the reins. After a while he turned his head a little and in a stentorian voice which defied the blizzard, cried out, "What time does this thing *bust?*" For the moment we were nonplussed; then, "Oh, the concert?" I replied; "it will be over about ten." "I'll be thur-r for yer," said he, and so he was when the time came, — blessings on his rough humanity! When we descended from the buggy at the hall, our clothes were thickly coated with ice, and our temperatures must have been at least ten degrees below zero! We resembled frosted figures on a Brobdingnagian wedding-cake. However, we survived the adventure, by the grace of God!

Once, on reaching a God-forsaken little town in Minnesota, named Mankato, what was our disgust to find that only two rooms were available for our party of six, instead of the five rooms bespoken by Mr. Luer. Another "show" — some African minstrels — had arrived before us, and the preference had been given to them! Urso and her husband were furious! The hotel proprietor was perched on a table, dangling his legs and chewing. When Mr. Luer made his angry protest, all he got for his pains was — after a well-directed and far-reaching explosion of tobacco-juice — "Guess you'll have to double up."

"Double up! When we have in our party a single lady, three men, and a married couple?"

"Wull, if you don't like it, you can go anywhere else yer darned please!" was the amiable rejoinder. As we knew as well as the proprietor himself that there was no other hotel in Mankato where decent people could stay, we had, of course, to make the best of it, Urso and her husband taking one of the rooms, and I the other, while the men wandered forth to find some place to lay their heads. They had finally to content themselves with quarters in a house of unsavory repute!

One more unenviable experience was ours on departing from Kansas City, where we had been entertained at the hotel at least with civility. We were due next night at Lincoln, Nebraska, and the only way in which we could get over the ground on time was by chartering a special car to take us to a point where we could make connection with the regular train in the morning. To accomplish this we had to leave Kansas City at three A.M., which allowed us barely three hours' rest between our return from the concert and starting to cross the frozen Missouri River in an omnibus.

During the day we had been told that ice had been cut on the river, but that no sign had been posted to indicate where the more recently frozen ice would be too thin for safety, in consequence of which one team had gone under. This sensational story had made a direful impression on Urso, who was nothing if not an unreasonable creature, and moreover always violent in the manifestation of her feelings. From the first moment we struck the river she commenced to cry out wildly, "We shall go under! I know we shall! The ice is cracking now!" And with every rasp and creak of the wheels she took to shrieking hysterically with fright. We all of us did our best to quiet and reassure her, and her husband, who was always very patient with her in her outbursts, tried to soothe her as one might a child. I shall never forget that crossing of the Missouri, — the temperature twenty below zero, and that panic-stricken woman making night hideous with her shrieks. It was like a horrid nightmare!

It had not been deemed worth while to heat the special car detailed for us, so we had the pleasure of riding for several hours in the freezing cold of twenty below zero. How thankful we were for the blessed warmth of the train to Lincoln when at last we transferred our petrified bodies to it!

Quite an unusual number of people in gala attire came crowding into the cars at every station. They all seemed to be in high spirits, talking, laughing, and greeting newcomers with, "You for the show, too?" It never occurred to us till we arrived at Lincoln that *we* were the "show," and that these merry people were making an all-day journey to hear our concert.

We naturally expected Lincoln to be a city of some importance; but what was our astonishment to find a most desolate-looking place, scarcely anything more than a number of ugly wooden buildings and small houses dumped promiscuously on a prairie! We could hardly believe our eyes! This the geographical center of Nebraska! It was evident that whatever Lincoln might be going to be in the future, it was not yet! There was no hall and our concert had to take place in the church, a sizable but wholly hideous structure. But no matter! We had become inured to all sorts of unexpected things.

So the gaily dressed, joyous, and enthusiastic audience, in its marked contrast to the general surroundings, afforded us only one more theme for amused comment.

It is not to be supposed, however, that in the devious course of our travels our experiences were all of a piece! We had to take in all those queer places "en route" for more important centers, on account of the enormous stretches of country to be crossed to get anywhere, for our tour extended into Canada and ended with a month in New England. But when we found ourselves in a University center — as for instance, Ann Arbor — we even dared to give our programmes as originally printed, and as for hotels, — they were palatial as compared with those above described.

If I have dwelt on the seamy side of our experiences in describing some of the crudest specimens of civilization in America, it is because it is peculiarly interesting to recall what those places were in 1875 in the light of what they are to-day; and because it emphasizes the extraordinary strides made since that time in this wonderful country, which in but a few years has metamorphosed deserts into smiling landscapes, dignified and flourishing cities.

CHAPTER X

CHANGE OF ABODE — A BOARDING HOUSE ON ASHBURTON PLACE — CONGENIAL FRIENDS — GENERAL CORSE — TEACHING, A NEW INTEREST — HAENDEL'S ORATORIO "JOSHUA" AT THE WORCESTER FESTIVAL — MIND OVER MATTER — MENDELSSOHN'S "SON AND STRANGER" — A VISIT FROM VON BÜLOW — B. J. LANG'S NEEDLESS PRECAUTION — VISITS TO NAHANT — LILIAN NORTON'S BEGINNINGS — NORDICA FULL-FLEDGED — AT THE HENSCHELS' IN LONDON

ON returning to Boston after my absence on tour I took up my abode in new and desirable quarters on Ashburton Place, where I also found congenial fellow boarders. One of them — a temporary inmate — was General Corse, known as "Allatoona Corse," a splendid specimen of strong manhood. Frederick Tudor and his family were there also, and several other interesting and friendly people. I formed there an intimate friendship with Mrs. Theodore Adams, a very bright little woman with strong human sympathies, — a friendship which lasted during the whole of her lifetime.

I now began to be sought as teacher by quite a number of young singers without any effort on my part. And though, at first, I only accepted them as pupils because they seemed to want me, I found myself becoming daily more and more interested in working with them. It opened a new vista in art to me, — that of imparting knowledge and ideas and of finding the best ways of reaching different minds of different degrees of intelligence. There was really, in a way, more stimulus in it than in public singing, as things were then in this country, for during the absence of Dresel I suffered intensely in singing to the wretched, uninspiring and unmusical accompaniments to which I was forced to submit for lack of anything better. It amounted literally to this: that I had to choose my songs with reference to the capacity of the accompanist to play them, rather than to suit my own taste. Of course I had sometimes to absent myself from my pupils for concert engagements, but that was always understood.

On one occasion I was engaged for the Worcester Festival to sing Haendel's Oratorio of "Joshua." The reason why this particular engagement stands out in my memory is because it marked my first conception of the power of mind over matter. It was this way. Following a visit to a dentist I became afflicted with an ulcerated wisdom tooth, and when the time came for me to sing in Worcester, I was in such intense pain that I would have given anything to be excused from my engagement. But I knew very well that no one else was sufficiently familiar with "Joshua" to be able to take my place. I therefore felt obliged to fulfil my task. Doctor Langmaid, who had betaken himself to Worcester to hear the oratorio, on coming to see me just before the performance, exclaimed, "I don't see how it is possible for you to sing with that swollen face and while suffering such pain!"

When I took my seat on the platform with the orchestra and chorus at my back and the crowded audience in front, the heat of the hall augmented my agony to a point almost unbearable! Then the chord was struck which introduced my first recitative and aria. I stood up automatically, with the single purpose of interpreting the music; I was conscious of nothing else! At the conclusion of my song, after bowing my thanks for the applause, my first thought was, as I resumed my seat, "What has become of my pain?" It had left me entirely while I was singing! But even as I began to wonder and speculate about it, back it came — the sharp, shooting pain — in full force. Throughout the performance the same experience was repeated.

This set me thinking afterwards that provided the mind were *concentrated* on something outside the body, the consciousness of pain would cease to exist. Then I reflected, "If we could but locate our consciousness *where* we please and *when* we please, we could laugh at pain!" But there was the rub — *if we could!* In this particular case it was the law of necessity which compelled my consciousness from pain to song; but could I ever succeed in compassing the same end of my own free will? That was the great question yet to be answered!

When this first whisper of the actual power of mind over matter came to me, exponents of Mental Science, so called, had not yet been heard from, but my experience at Worcester had rendered me very receptive and very eager to learn what had been formulated on the subject when the time came. It was one of my pupils — known to the public as Mrs. Humphrey Allen —who first enlisted my attention to the subject, and since that time I have followed all the various developments of New Thought, including "Christian Science," culling therefrom such wisdom as appealed to my understanding.

An unusual musical event for Boston was a performance, at Union Hall, of Mendelssohn's one and only operetta, "The Son and Stranger." A group of my friends, in which Mrs. James Lodge, Mrs. George Howe, Mrs. Codman, the Pratts, and Mr. Richard S. Fay were prominent, got it up to raise a goodly sum for a deserving benevolence. It was in the character of an amateur performance, though some professional musicians took part in it, the direction of the music being in charge of B. J. Lang. I happen to have just come upon a programme. The cast was as follows: Lisbeth — Clara Doria; Ursula — Ita Welsh; The Mayor — William Apthorp; Hermann — Nat Childs; Hans — Doctor C. E. Bullard; Martin — A. S. Dabney. The overture and interlude (four hands) were played by Hugo Leonard and B. J. Lang.

The rehearsals took place for the most part in my music room. A characteristic Boston atmosphere pervaded all the proceedings, and it was curious how amateurish I myself felt *dans cette galère*, partly, I suppose, because the dialogue of the operetta made it savor of private theatricals. It was a great success, a large proportion of Boston Brahmins turning out for the occasion, and a handsome sum being raised for the charity.

Following in the footsteps of all the other European celebrities, Von Bülow also found his way to America, and on coming to Boston to play both with orchestra and in recitals, we naturally resumed our friendly relations. When he came to visit me at Ashburton Place and we could talk freely together and exchange views on matters musical in America, he let himself go in his old sarcastic vein, slashing some of our leading musical lights without mercy, not hesitating to make use of the term "pig" when irately disposed!

One evening, when the Langs were about to entertain

Von Bülow at dinner, Mr. Lang said to his wife, "Fanny, I want you to be careful not to allude in any way to the Wagners, as it might bring up unpleasant recollections and prove embarrassing!" The dinner passed off happily, but in the course of the evening — apropos of some picture under discussion — Mrs. Lang said, "Let me see, where did we see that?" To which Benjamin himself promptly replied, "It was at Wagner's." Whereupon Von Bülow exclaimed cheerily, "Ah, you were at Wagner's? Then you saw my viddow; how vas she?"

Madeline Schiller, my old friend of Leipzig days, also crossed my path again. She had married a Mr. Bennett — originally from Cambridge — and had come to live in Boston to resume her professional career, her husband having lost his health. We came together frequently, reviving old associations, and I sang for her at her concerts and recitals, as she was working hard to support and educate her two children. She was still the same gentle, graceful creature as of yore, and never failed to make a pleasing impression when she played in public.

In the late spring when the Brahmins began to take flight to their cottages at the seashore, many were the little visits I made to the Codmans at their delightful house at Nahant. Wherever Leslie Codman ruled there was an air of luxurious comfort, and life with her was always restful, although constantly varied by intercourse with agreeable people who casually dropped in; such as Charlie Whittier, Frank Hunniwell, Doctor Borland, Willie Otis — that incorrigible *enfant terrible* — and Mrs. Burdan, whose beautiful daughter Bessie a few years later became the wife of Marion Crawford.

Ned Codman spent most of his time in sailing his boat, which he loved better than he did anything on earth. Once and once only he persuaded me to go sailing in it. His little daughter Lily sacrificed herself to me by accompanying us. Heavens! how unutterably boresome it was, to say nothing of how uncomfortable we both felt, wabbling about with not enough breeze to keep things steady. But — never again!

One evening, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Dexter came over from Manchester to dine and spend the night. I never remember to have seen a couple on whom my eye rested with such pure satisfaction. Gordon suggested the ideal Faust rejuvenated, and she a Psyche in her perfection of form, feature, and color. Charming people — to the manner born! I felt like thanking them for affording me such a vision of beauty!

One of Boston's well-known musicians, J. C. Parker — my friendship with whom began in Trinity Church Choir, where he officiated as organist and director — had always felt great interest in Lilian Norton (later translated into Giglio Nordica), having great faith in her future possibilities.

One day he came to me, evidently in some distress of mind on her account, with "Oh, Miss Doria, won't you try to do something to save Lilian Norton?"

"From what?" I asked.

"From going downhill in her singing," was his reply. "I feel that her voice has deteriorated of late; I am afraid she is not in the right hands and that she ought to change her teacher."

"But what would you have *me* do about it?" quoth I. "I cannot arrogate to myself the right to save voices as a missionary does to save souls! Should Lilian Norton come to me of her own accord for advice, I would do all in my power to help her, but as it is I certainly cannot interfere."

He shook his head sorrowfully. "If only you could get hold of her!" was his refrain. The sequel to this not generally known episode in Nordica's career may be of interest to some of her many admirers who have applauded her in Grand Opera after she had "found herself." Certain solicitous friends besides Mr. Parker having got it into their heads — whether justly or unjustly — that Lilian Norton ought to have a different instructor and finding it impossible to undermine her loyalty to her Boston teacher, who, out of the goodness of his heart had for years given her of his best, never rested till they got her away from him by obtaining for her a church position in New York, her residence there making a change of teacher inevitable.

Some years after I heard her sing in Boston, and I am bound to confess that she sang much better before she left Boston than she did then. There was a lack of spontaneity, an artificiality in her singing, which rendered it far less pleasing than when she was under the instruction of her good old teacher of the New England Conservatory of Music. However, in the course of time, and after varied experiences abroad, her own natural gifts reasserted themselves, and she came once more into her own, plus a further and richer general development.

Years later, after she had become famous, I met her at the house of the Henschels in London, when she came to introduce Zoltan Döme, who was to be her second venture in the matrimonial lottery. I asked her which of her teachers in Europe had really helped her to perfect her voice and singing. Her answer was, "None of them! I gleaned some good ideas from this one and that one, but I was forced to conclude, in the long run, that I was my own best teacher." I felt so entirely at one with her in that same conclusion, that having been precisely my own case, that it furnished a sort of bond of sympathy between us.

On that same afternoon at the Henschels' we had some improvised music, Nordica's fiancé giving specimens of very characteristic Hungarian songs which he sang with much spirit, after which Nordica sang with Henschel the duet from "The Flying Dutchman," in which she let herself go, inspired by the informality of the occasion and an appreciative audience of five — her voice pealing out grandly in that fine music room.

I recall with what a rueful little face Lilian Henschel deplored what she deprecatingly styled her "small voice" in comparison with Nordica's resonant tones. I called her attention to the fact that her voice and style of singing were in perfect harmony with her whole personality and that, after its kind, her singing was as grateful and quite as delightful to her audiences as Nordica's, which, in its turn, was well suited to her ample form and bolder characteristics.

I cannot help reflecting how often one meets with people who are full of discontent at their own natural equipment, who would prefer to be like some one else. The small of stature would be tall; those of a generous build would be slender; the brunette would be blonde; the blonde, brunette; and the comic actor is crushed because he would be playing Hamlet!

CHAPTER XI

A NEW HOME IN CHELTENHAM — "COTTESWOLD" AND ITS ATTRACTIONS — FAMILY AFFECTIONS — RETURN TO BOSTON — CAPTAIN HORATIO MCKAY'S HOSPITALITY — A NEW FRIENDSHIP — MRS. ROBERT CARTER — A VISIT TO ELMWOOD — RUSSELL LOWELL AND HIS ELMS — FIRST MEETING WITH LONGFELLOW — ENTERTAINED AT CRAIGIE HOUSE — THE POET WRITES — IMPRESSIONS OF LONGFELLOW — A LASTING FRIENDSHIP — A PORTRAIT ACCOUNTED FOR — SOME GUESTS OF LONGFELLOW — LUIGI MONTI

CROSSING the ocean to visit my family during the summer season — now that I was a free lance — was henceforth to be a permanent item in my yearly programme. The attraction to my home in England had been greatly augmented by the advent of a precious little son to my sister Rosamond. That babe — who was named Felix — became the apple of my eye! He crept right into my heart from his earliest infancy and remained there enthroned during the whole of his all too brief existence. I never knew that I had it in me to feel such a deep tenderness for any human creature! For his part, he returned my love in full measure; for there was a peculiar sympathy and freemasonry between us from the first dawning of his intelligence.

Another new attraction was a really beautiful home called "Cotteswold," which my father and Domenico jointly had recently purchased. It was a dignified stone mansion approached by a broad driveway, sheltered from the road by a thick grove of trees. Planted on the highest elevation of Leckhampton Hill it afforded a full view of the Vale of Gloucester framed in the Malvern Hills. Truly, a most attractive site!

The original owner of the estate had expended a larger sum than he had anticipated on the solid stone structure, the interior modern improvements, and on landscape gardening, in consequence of which, after it was all finished, he could not afford to live in it. His sudden death brought the estate into the market, and my father and Domenico, who had for years looked forward to possessing such a one for their very own, gladly seized the opportunity of acquiring it. This new possession, to which was added that of a victoria and a horse for my mother, had a most mellowing effect on my father's disposition. His rather deprecating attitude towards things in general had given place to a happier frame of mind.

My father, who was nothing if not eclectic in his tastes, had also found a new interest in cultivating the land and raising all sorts of foreign products not yet to be found in English markets. The flower garden was also a perennial joy to him. With what pride did he take me into the grounds and introduce me to his standard rose bushes interspersed with picturesque bee hives! And how he prided himself on raising the finest strawberries and gooseberries in all England!

My mother, too, was experiencing a comfort in life to which she had long been a stranger. To be settled in her own home for good meant the world to her, — and *such* a home! Here she could also once more indulge her taste for fancy poultry, with Julius as her trusted assistant. Life seemed to be now really quite worth while! No wonder, therefore, that in such a happy atmosphere, rendered still dearer by a temporary reunion with the Francillons, Eugene and Reginald, and that charmer, baby Felix, my summer vacations came always regretfully and tearfully to an end!

On one of my homeward trips — on the good ship *Parthia* — which was under the command of Captain Horatio McKay, I struck up a real friendship with a very interesting and sympathetic woman, Mrs. Robert Carter, who held at that time a very high office at the "Cooper Institute." Both she and I were constant guests in the comfortable little private cabin of our friendly and hospitable Captain, where we discussed daily all the affairs of all nations and more too.

Mrs. Carter's family lived in Cambridge, and one day after my return to Boston, when she happened to be on a visit to them, I went over to take luncheon with her there. After lunch she suggested our going over to Elmwood, the residence of Russell Lowell, who was an old friend of hers, and whom she had not seen since his return from abroad, a proposal gladly accepted by me!

We found him in his library, buried in books. He looked up, his fine leonine countenance lighting up with a friendly smile. After talking about books and things for a while, Mrs. Carter asked, "Are you not glad to find yourself once more ensconced in your beautiful home?" Lowell shook his head and answered gravely, "Too many ghosts! — Too many ghosts!"

Later he took me out into the grounds to see his dear elm trees, of which he was justly proud. "Do you know," he said dreamily, "those trees of mine know me — they feel my presence! You will hardly believe it, but when I returned after a long absence abroad I found them drooping, rusty, and sad-looking, and now, just look at them, so replete with life and luxuriant verdure. They loved me as their friend — they mourned my absence — they rejoice once more in my presence!"

There spoke the Poet who sees and feels what the rest of us ignore.

It was at a little dinner party at the house of the James T. Fields that I first met Longfellow, whose friendship later became a beautiful feature of my life in Boston. The only other guests were Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

Longfellow was the poet of my childhood! I loved his verses beyond those of all others. For me they were to poetry what the Bible was to religion! Had any one told me that I should ever see him in the flesh — that I should actually sit beside him at dinner — I could not have believed it. It would have seemed as impossible as to be hobnobbing with David, Solomon, or Jeremiah. The author of "The Blind Girl of Castle Cuille," which we used to spout on the lawn at Monson Villa so long, long ago! Think of it! It seemed then already that Longfellow must be as old as the hills! And here he was seated at my right hand, those kind eyes of his upon me, and that gentle, low, harmonious voice sounding in my ear! I was so transported that any brilliant sallies from the lips of Thomas Bailey Aldrich must have passed over my head. I was alive to nothing else save the wonder of it all!

Our next meeting occurred shortly after, when I was engaged to sing at one of Professor J. K. Paine's concerts at Sanders Theater, an occasion which attracted a number of Boston people to Cambridge, the fact that

Dresel had volunteered to play my accompaniments being indeed of itself a lure!

Professor Longfellow had conceived the gracious idea of arranging a little supper party for me at Craigie House after the concert. There I sat once more beside him. My place at table was between Longfellow and Russell Lowell. Besides Longfellow's three amiable daughters, the other guests were Cirillo, John S. Dwight, Dresel, Professor Luigi Monti and the Fields, who, with their usual friendliness, had taken me under their wing to Sanders Theater.

What a sweet welcome we all received from our gracious host to his *tavola rotonda*, as he always termed his attractive round table, and what a wonderful evening it was! Not that either Longfellow or the others displayed any particular brillancy, but because the whole atmosphere was so exquisitely harmonious and genial.

On leaving Craigie House that night I happened to drop a bracelet on the verandah steps as I was getting into the carriage, and the following pretty note was the outcome of that circumstance. I transcribe it as an instance of the delightfully romantic strain inherent in Longfellow's nature, — a strain tinged with humour which kept his heart ever young.

Cambridge, February 7, 1877.

"Dear Miss Doria:

"As the Ritter von Toggenburg knocked at the Castle gate and heard the fatal words, — '*Sie du suchst trägt den Schleier — ist des Himmels Braut,*' so two days ago I knocked at your door and heard the equally fatal words: 'She's gone to Providence!' The truth is, I was like the Prince in the Fairy Tale and came to try on the glass slipper which you dropped after our pleasant supper. How unlucky I was to choose just the day when you were not at home! I trust the glass slipper — I mean the bracelet, reached you safely. I gave special charge to the maid at the door to lay it upon your pianoforte. Hoping that you will come and see us again soon and drop another bracelet or something else for me to bring back to you, I am, with all good wishes,

"Yours very truly,
"Henry W. Longfellow."

This gracious note was followed by frequent invitations to dine at the *tavola rotonda* — some of which were delivered in person and others in the form of graceful missives, — all of which I have faithfully preserved as precious mementoes of a much-loved friend.

After these intimate little dinners we were wont to pass into the beautiful *salon* when I used often to sing some of the simple Italian songs which Longfellow loved to hear. It also happened sometimes that instead of joining the young people in the *salon* he would say, "Won't you come into my study?" There would he show me all sorts of interesting books, and we, with our toes on the fender, would talk about Italy and its charms and consult with each other as to how the translated lyrics of Heine and Goethe could be improved on and better adapted to the songs of Schubert and Schumann.

Longfellow, though an idealist, was not a dreamy poet. He never seemed lost in the clouds, but on the contrary was peculiarly considerate and alert in all matters which concerned the pleasure or comfort of others. I recall, when once at his request I went to Craigie House to hear two little "child wonders" play the piano, how he had prepared beforehand some neat little packages of sweets for the children to take home with them; and I still see with my mind's eye the venerable picture of that gentle, fatherly face bending over the little ones perched on his knees, — his rugged white beard sweeping lightly over their little smooth heads!

Whenever the time approached for me to make one of my annual trips to England he always came to bring me some little appropriate gift for my journey. On one occasion he brought me in addition the verses in manuscript of "Stay at Home, my Heart, and Rest," saying, "I wrote these verses expressly for you — to have and to keep for your own song. Perhaps," he added, "your father may care to set them to music and you will sing your song to me sometime."

My father did set them to music and the song was first sung in London by Sims Reeves.

Longfellow had expressed the wish that I would go to the photographers, Elliot and Fry, in London, who, he felt sure, could make a better picture of me than any he had yet seen. I accordingly did so and the result was the identical picture which illustrates the verses above mentioned in the complete illustrated Edition de Luxe published in 1879 by Houghton, Osgood and Company.

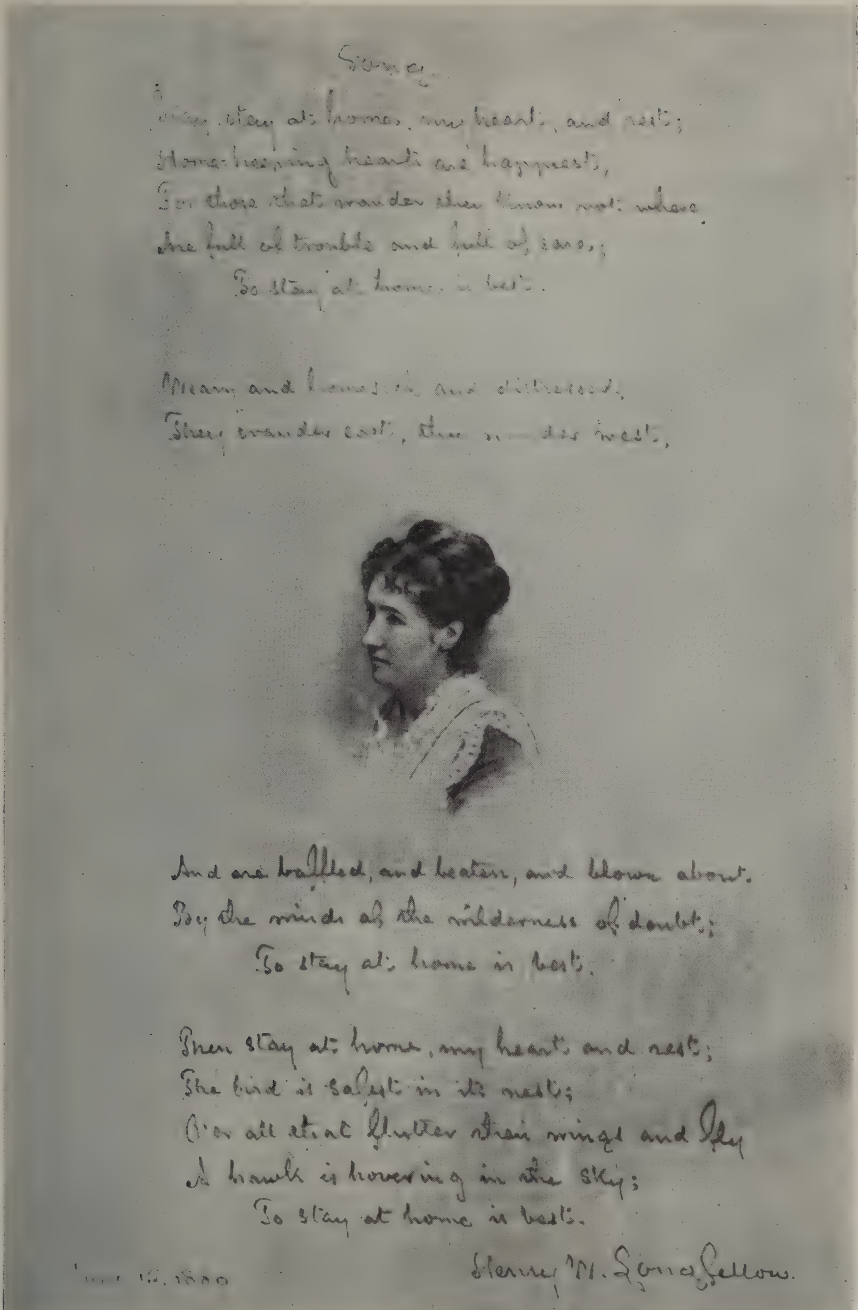
I am constantly asked to explain how it happened that my portrait appears there. It was this way: Every poem in this new edition was to have an illustration of some sort; but when it came to my song, which I had consented to have them include in the volume, A. V. S. Anthony (the last of the fine wood engravers) and those associated with him, were at their wits' end how to illustrate it; there was nothing in the verses out of which to make a picture. In their perplexity they went out to Cambridge to consult the poet himself about it. In reply to their question, "What illustration he could suggest?" he said promptly, "Clara Doria's picture, of course! It is her song — written for her. What could be more appropriate?" So they gladly availed themselves of so simple a solution of their problem.

As further instance of Longfellow's thoughtfulness and consideration of the minor details which smooth the way of social life, every time that I was invited to dine at Craigie House he invariably took the trouble to arrange for a proper escort for me. Sometimes it would be John S. Dwight, and at others Professor Luigi Monti, who, by the way, was no other than "The Young Sicilian, In sight of Etna born and bred," described in Longfellow's "Wayside Inn," now, however, no longer young, though still full of life and enthusiasm and a great lover of music. He always remained a stanch and devoted friend of mine, and during the first decade of my married life was a constant visitor at our house.

The following letter illustrates Longfellow's solicitude for the comfort and convenience of his guests, as well as his beautiful courtesy and his playful vein:

"Dear Miss Doria,

"We missed you on Friday and ate our bread in silence. But that only heightens the pleasure of seeing you next Friday. Let nothing impede or postpone your coming, for the days grow few before your sailing. What day is fixed upon? I am going to keep it as a Fast-day. I have not heard of Mr. Monti's return, but you shall not want for an escort home. Perhaps you will not mind coming out alone by daylight. If you do, pray send a



Song

Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled, and beaten, and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest;
The bird is safest in its nest;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky;
To stay at home is best.

[illegible] 15, 1880
Henry W. Longfellow.

REPRODUCTION OF POEM BY LONGFELLOW
Written for and presented to the Author

NEWTON

line to our friend, Dwight, who is always welcome and I am sure will be only too happy to attend you. But I suppose it will hardly do to bring these two opposite notes of the musical battery together. It would be too lively, for perhaps Mr. Cirillo will be here! At all events you shall have a guardian angel of some kind to see you safe within the walls of Ashburton Place.

"Yours always faithfully,
"H. W. Longfellow."

Longfellow dearly loved the sunny side of life and all that was calm and peaceful, instinctively shunning everything gruesome. When Salvini was playing in Boston some years later, in one of his letters he said, "I am so tired of tragedies that I shall hardly go to see Salvini. If one were asked to go and see a colored man murder his wife in a back street he would probably decline. Seen in a mirror, a picture has its outlines softened."

I happened to be dining at Craigie House just after the engagement of Edith Longfellow to Richard H. Dana, Third, was announced. What a fine well-mated couple they were! So full of life and splendid potentialities. It was a joy to sit opposite them at the *tavola rotunda* and contemplate their happiness!

For all the freedom of our intercourse I never remember hearing Longfellow utter a single censorious remark or indulge in even good-natured sarcasm — except once — and that was when the young people at table happened to bring up the name of Martin Tupper, in allusion to some tactless break of his while their guest. Tupper's egotism had been too much to be passed over even by Longfellow's charity!

Many were the instances of Tupper's extraordinary self-complaisance humorously imparted to me by James T. Fields, who had likewise been one of Tupper's entertainers during his stay in Boston. His boast was that his "Proverbial Philosophy" had had almost as large a sale as the Bible, and larger than the works of any other author dead or living — including Shakespeare! Of the latter he spoke in quite patronizing terms, and on contemplating a portrait of Shakespeare — a rare engraving greatly prized by his host — all he said was, "Ah! Poor William! He fills a drunkard's grave!"

Mr. Fields' experience of Tupper brought back to me that my Aunt Mary, when I was a small child, was perpetually quoting Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" till it became a regular bugbear to us children. His intimate talk about Tupper was like a resuscitation to me, for even in those far-off days I had thought that he must have been buried long ago!

All the literary lights who happened to come to Boston to lecture or give readings were sure to bring letters to Longfellow and to be entertained by him. Thus, one evening at Craigie House, I found myself beside Wilkie Collins, a typical Britisher of the genial, free and easy type, friendly and pleasant, but without distinction. He broke at once into a familiar strain of conversation without the usual attempt to feel the way, — an omission for which I always feel grateful.

He opened the conversation abruptly, I own somewhat to my surprise, with, "Do you ever dream that you find yourself somehow in the company of people when you haven't any clothes on, or in some equally embarrassing situation?" As my answer was in the affirmative, it led naturally to many quaint reminiscences on his part, on something along the same lines, dreams being a subject which seemed to interest him particularly.

I have found that a personal acquaintance with authors does not always enhance one's pleasure in the perusal of their works! On the whole, I think that the best of the individual gets into his books and that what remains is often apt to be disappointing!

My acquaintance with Doctor Oliver Wendell Holmes was only a slight one. After meeting him casually on several occasions, however, one evening at a little informal party at the house of Frank Boot, I noticed that he kept looking in my direction with a puzzled expression, and that he said something to his host which, although I did not hear it, I felt sure was, "Who is that lady over there?" Mr. Boot finally brought him over to me. On my remarking that no introduction was necessary, as we had met before, Doctor Holmes confessed that his memory only held good for old-time acquaintances, and that he suffered sadly from an inability to remember either the names or faces of people he was by way of meeting at the present time. After chatting awhile he ended characteristically by saying, "Now, the next time you see me in the street, do me the favor to slap me on the back; you must not let me forget you again!"

It is a source of regret to me that I did not arrive on the scene in time to know Emerson, — the *real* Emerson, I mean! It is true, he was still in the flesh, but the beautiful spirit and that great mentality had already passed into the beyond, and is there anything much more painful to contemplate than the waning faculties of a great man?

CHAPTER XII

A SHOWER OF COCKTAILS — GIN COCKTAIL VERSUS SEASICKNESS — EFFECT OF COCKTAILS ON AN AIR CUSHION — IN LIVERPOOL AGAIN — AN UGLY PLIGHT — A TEMPERANCE HOTEL — AN OLD FRIEND AND A NEW ONE — HENRY M. ROGERS — MEMORIES OF THE CIVIL WAR — PRESIDENT LINCOLN — A HAPPY TRIP — BOSTON LIGHT UNWELCOME — MATED — STRANGE WORKINGS OF FATE — A WEDDING

WITH the coming of June it was again time for me to cross the ocean once more. The day before I betook myself to the good ship *Parthia*, the maid handed me a package with "Something for you, Miss!" It was a quart bottle of gin cocktail! Within an hour another bottle arrived, and later on yet another! They all bore the label of one Billy Pitcher, — known to the male sex as a famous expert in cocktails. What did it mean? Why should I be the innocent recipient of all this compromising liquor? I got at it finally through the Adamses, who were responsible for one of the bottles.

It seems that after my last ocean trip I had told certain of my friends how, after a miserable week of seasickness, I had been put on my feet by the kind ministrations of a clergyman's wife, who, after diagnosing my condition, declared that what I was then suffering from was not any longer seasickness, but starvation. I protested that I could not eat, that I loathed the sight of food. She then prescribed a gin cocktail with a preponderance of Angostura bitters and insisted on ordering for me the right sort. I took it quiescently; indeed, I would have taken Prussic acid or any deadly thing to end my misery! The result was magical. I became forthwith as hungry as a hunter, and from that moment I got well.

This story of mine evidently lingered in the minds of several of my friends, each one of whom had conceived the same benevolent idea of sending me off well prepared for the worst, each in turn resorting to the same expert cocktail maker. When the third man appeared at his saloon with, "Billy, I want you to put me up a quart of your 'best' and send it to Miss Doria," Billy's eyes began to bulge. "Good Lord," quoth he, "what sort of a woman is that Miss Doria? Does she drink cocktail by the gallon, or does she take a bath in it?"

I put one bottle into my bag and took it along just to show good feeling, and of course it happened that I had no occasion to use it. The passage was foggy and smooth and Captain McKay made me so comfortable in his little deck parlor that I never had even a qualm!

One day I chanced to look into the little sitting room on deck for ladies with which the *Parthia* was furnished, and being struck by the pathetic sight of a number of unhappy-looking beings in various stages of monotonous misery, — some armed with drooping needlework, others with books turned face downward, — I made it my job to cheer them up a bit. I told them that the infallible remedy for their complaint was a gin cocktail! They were horribly shocked and eyed me with unmistakable distrust and suspicion. But when I added casually that it was the highly respectable wife of a clergyman who had recommended it to me, I was conscious that they experienced a change of heart. So I rang for the steward to fetch the neglected bottle from my stateroom and bring some glasses.

Having administered a goodly dose to each one in turn, all began promptly to perk up, to look cheerful and talk nineteen to the dozen! The sad sequel was that one good woman, mistaking my much cherished air-cushion for a pincushion, stuck her needle into it with a delightfully complaisant smile. Her look of astonishment as she saw the cushion gradually collapse, never to rise again, was comical to behold!

It was a relief to have disposed so successfully of "Billy Pitcher's best," but my poor air-cushion, — sacrificed on the altar of a cocktail! Well, there! It is no use crying over spilt milk. It was equally of no use crying over a "busted" air-cushion.

My summer at Cotteswold passed even more happily than the previous one. There was the same family reunion and there was my little pet, Felix, now a year older, a year more intelligent, and a year more winsome to gladden my heart.

The twins were in good fettle and well satisfied with their progress in their chosen callings. Reginald, who began his literary career by writing stories for magazines and songs for composers, was later made sub-editor of the *Tatler*, with Robert Francillon as editor; and still later he edited a paper in East Kent which brought him into contact with Clark Russell, the sea novelist. After a year or two Clark Russell joined the staff of the Newcastle *Chronicle*, and when he transferred his services to the London *Daily Telegraph*, Reginald was installed in his place, — a position which, by the way, he still holds. Meanwhile, Eugene had become the London representative of several large Paris houses.

All of this had not yet happened at that time, but the promising conditions which led to those advancements had already manifested themselves and were a source of satisfaction both to the twins and to the family in general.

With the coming of September it was time for me to make preparations for my return to America.

Having, as usual, telegraphed ahead to the "Adelphi" for the reservation of a room, I felt it would be quite safe to take a late train from Cheltenham which would bring me into Liverpool at night. But what was my dismay on arriving there at being informed by the hotel porter that already on receipt of my telegram the hotel was full to overflowing, and that there was not a nook or corner left where they could bestow a lady! A great Masonic gathering from all parts of the country was the cause of this unwonted congestion. The manager had tried to engage a room for me at the "Northwestern," but in vain; that hotel was in the same case as the "Adelphi."

What was to be done? Where was I to pass the night? In the cab? In my desperation I appealed to the cabman, who looked like a nice fatherly person, to suggest some respectable place where I could put up for the night. His encouraging answer was, "There's the 'Washington' over yonder; there'll be plenty of room there, mum; it's a temperance hotel!" I bade him take me there at once and, oh, joy! I found that the good man had uttered words of wisdom, and understood thoroughly the precise relation of a concourse of men from anywhere in Great Britain to *Temperance!* for I was received with eagerness at the "Washington" and promptly settled in a comfortable room.

Next morning, on my way to the breakfast room, who should I see standing in the hall but a good friend of mine, Judge John P. Putnam, who was gazing intently at a huge pile of trunks. He greeted me enthusiastically with the exclamation, "I was just looking at the name of 'Clara Doria' on two of those trunks and wondering whether we were really going to have the pleasure of your company on the *Parthia*."

"Is Mrs. Putnam with you?" I asked, "or are you alone?"

"No, she is not, but I am not alone, for I was fortunate enough to fall in with my friend Henry M. Rogers, and we joined forces. Of course you know what a delightful companion he is. So joyous and so witty!"

"No, I don't. I never met him," was my answer.

"What!" he exclaimed with surprise, "you don't know Henry Rogers, — one of our distinguished Boston lawyers?"

At this moment there emerged from the breakfast room a tall, "light-complected gentleman" (as later one of the maids at my boarding house described him), with strong features and a twinkle in his eye! Judge Putnam hastened to introduce us as fellow passengers, and I was struck at once by a courtliness of manner somewhat out of the common.

There was nothing extraordinary about our first meeting except that though we had never met before we did not meet as strangers! It seemed, indeed, as though I had always known him. Never in all my intercourse with men had I experienced from the first such a feeling of perfect confidence — of at-home-ness! I did not, however, at that moment stop to ponder over the significance of that fact!

He followed me into the breakfast room and sat down with me at table, chatting until my omelette arrived, when he gracefully excused himself. After breakfast Judge Putnam and my new acquaintance awaited me in the hall with the proposition that they should escort me to the ship. So we started off merrily in the same cab, and from that moment Harry Rogers and I were never very far apart!

There was, I think, no premonition on my part that I had at last found my mate. Indeed there was nothing for me but the mere joy of a thoroughly congenial companionship and delightful communion with a sympathetic soul who seemed to understand all of me and to take an interest in all my concerns. Ours was a frank intercourse which dealt with life — with books — with family matters and with human interests of all kinds; but an intercourse which revealed the inner workings of both mind and heart of each to the other.

The tenderness and reverence with which he spoke of his father and the dear mother — then, alas! no longer the light of his home; his fondness for his sisters; his protective instinct for all who needed him, disclosed to me the bigness of his heart. The part he played in the great Boston fire of 1872 when his home on Kingston Street was menaced, together with those of many others, showed a strength of character, of determination and courage, which qualities had already suggested themselves to me in the strong aquiline nose and the well-developed chin with its central indentation (true to my habit of studying countenances and drawing my own inferences therefrom).

Many were the yarns we exchanged.

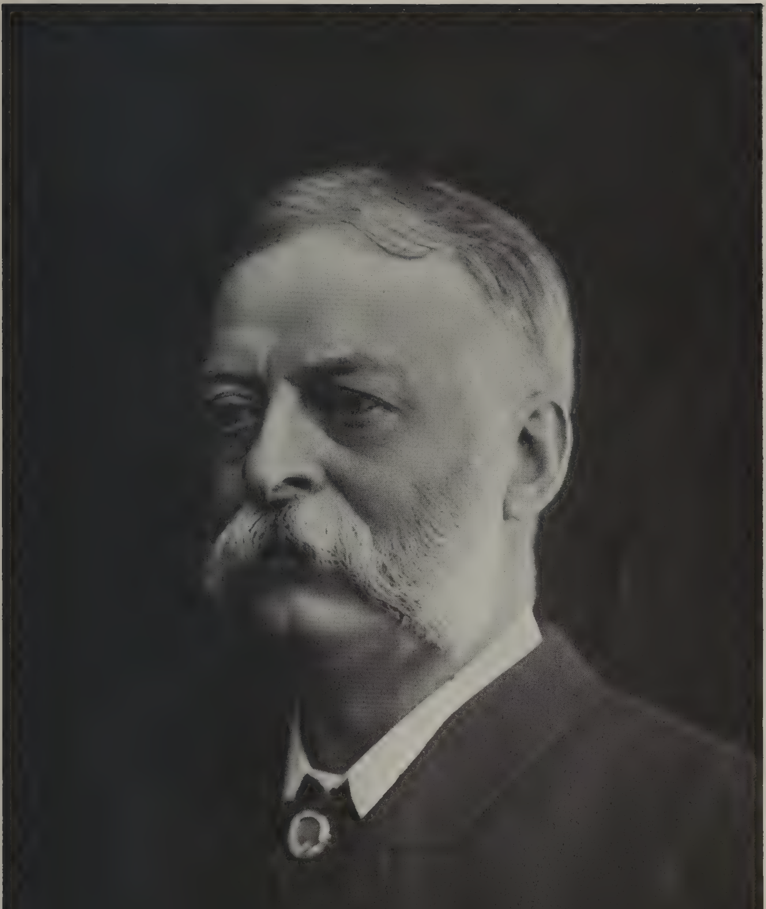
I told him some of my varied experiences in Germany and Italy, and he related the story of his life during the Civil War when, after graduating from Harvard University in the class of 1862, he offered his services to his country, thus deferring his studies in the Law School at Harvard till 1865. His account of his meeting with President Lincoln when he obtained from him his indorsement for the position of Paymaster in the United States Navy was to me both amusing and thrilling. It was Lincoln's son Bob — a college mate of his — who gave him a letter of introduction to President Lincoln, whom he always spoke of as "the Great Tycoon." And Lincoln in consequence was very kind to Henry Rogers.

In all our intercourse my new friend never represented himself as anything but a modest actor in and observer of great events, — never as a hero! But the simple narrative of the events themselves unfolded the nobility of his nature and the high ideals he was constantly striving to live up to!

And so the days passed merrily on the *Parthia*. There were two guests now to be entertained daily by Captain McKay in his little deck parlor. He had put his seal of approval on our intimacy by expressing himself to me to the effect that Henry Rogers was "a fine fellow." Judge Putnam, who was watchful but discreet, showed no anxiety as to what might be the ultimate result of our friendship.

For the first time in the experience of either one of us Boston Light was an unwelcome sight! Gladly would we have turned about and begun the journey all over again! But there we were. No going back on it!

As we approached the wharf, my companion recognized an old and intimate friend of his, Walter Sweet, awaiting his arrival, who, as soon as he saw that there were two of us, divined at once that the best service he could render his friend was to take upon himself all the



HENRY MUNROE ROGERS

unpleasant details of attending to both his and my luggage, so that we could have the opportunity to tell each other some of the many things left unsaid on the steamer! I have always since remembered his tactful consideration!

I was duly escorted by the two of them to Ashburton Place, where we finally parted. Should I say *parted?* Hardly! For next day a "light-complected gentleman — to see me" was announced, from whom I learned that he had become a neighbor of mine, having engaged for himself a room near by, as his father and sisters were at their cottage at the seashore and would not open their house in town till November.

Our good friends, Judge Putnam and his wife, offered us frequent opportunities for meeting at their house on Commonwealth Avenue, and it was quite apparent that they approved what seemed to them to be the inevitable outcome of our intimacy.

It was the day before Thanksgiving that we both came to the realization that we had come into each others' lives to stay.

It was Judge Putnam who took upon himself to write to my parents to tell them upon what kind of man my choice had fallen, and in what esteem he personally held both him and his family, so there remained nothing for us to do but to ask their consent to our union. It reached us duly twelve days later by cable, together with their blessing, and we were the two happiest mortals in the United States that day. Out of the fulness of his heart Harry had the cable mounted in a gold frame, and we have kept it near us for many, many years despite the current belief that such expressions of sentiment are soon outlived! All the sentiment of those days has never been and will never be outlived by either of us! And this I say after forty-one years of constant and close companionship!

We have often since reflected on the mysterious ways of destiny. How was it that during the first three or four years of my sojourn in Boston we had never come together, although we had actually been under the same roof once at a party, and although he had been present in the audience when I sang in opera at the Boston Theater? How strange that we had to cross the ocean to find each other, and that, apparently, so altogether by accident! Why did not the natural law of attraction that should have drawn us to each other operate sooner? It must have been that the right time had not yet come for either of us to change the tenor of our lives. But when once the hour had struck not even the ocean or a temperance hotel could keep us apart any longer!

The news of our engagement was somewhat startling to Harry's family, who had grown accustomed to regard him as a permanent fixture in the home, and whose devotion to him made it hard for them to contemplate a separation. They behaved beautifully under the trial, however, Harry's father taking me right into his big heart, and never doubting for a moment that his boy's choice was a happy one.

Any one who had ever known John H. Rogers and was capable of appreciating the beauty of his character, the purity of his life, his uncompromising integrity and above all his great wisdom, would readily understand how much his good opinion — his faith in me, a stranger — must have meant to me, and how I felt that it was something to be lived up to! It surely would not have been surprising if Harry's sisters had harbored some misgivings as to whether the step taken by their brother was likely to secure his happiness, that they should have felt some doubts as to the adaptability of a public singer to domestic life! But if they did have their misgivings they were gracefully concealed, and I was forthwith accepted cordially by them as one of the family.

Our wedding was a simple one. The ceremony was performed by Phillips Brooks in Trinity Church on the 24th of April, 1878. Judge Putnam gave me away, standing *in loco parentis*. As there was no member of my family on this side of the ocean, it seemed peculiarly appropriate that he should do so, as he had "seen us through."

From the church we drove straight to the permanent dwelling prepared for us on Beacon Street, only two doors from the residence of Harry's family, where our only celebration was a quiet little family dinner party.

We had agreed to dispense with the honeymoon of convention, preferring to defer our wedding trip till June, when we could take a long vacation and visit our family in England. The thought of introducing my husband into their midst; and their delight — which I pictured — in the genial companionship of this new member, was by no means the least of my joyful anticipations in our trip!

We spent the interim in improvising new comforts and putting the finishing touches to our home; that same home in which we have lived in the joy of perfect love and harmony for over forty years! A full life, intensely interesting in its variety of experiences and activities, and filled with sweet memories of worth-while friendships and of intimate relations with artists, men of letters, and other people of distinction; a life which has stood for an ever higher and richer development and greater uplift.

But that is another story — *our* story — to which this story of mine is only the prelude.

It must begin with our wedding journey, but where it will end must be "as God pleaseth!"

Citizens of Newton are invited to include the Newton Free Library as a beneficiary when preparing their wills.

The following clause is suggested:

"To the Trustees of the Newton Free Library the sum of dollars in trust, the income to be applied by said Trustees to the purchase of books."

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